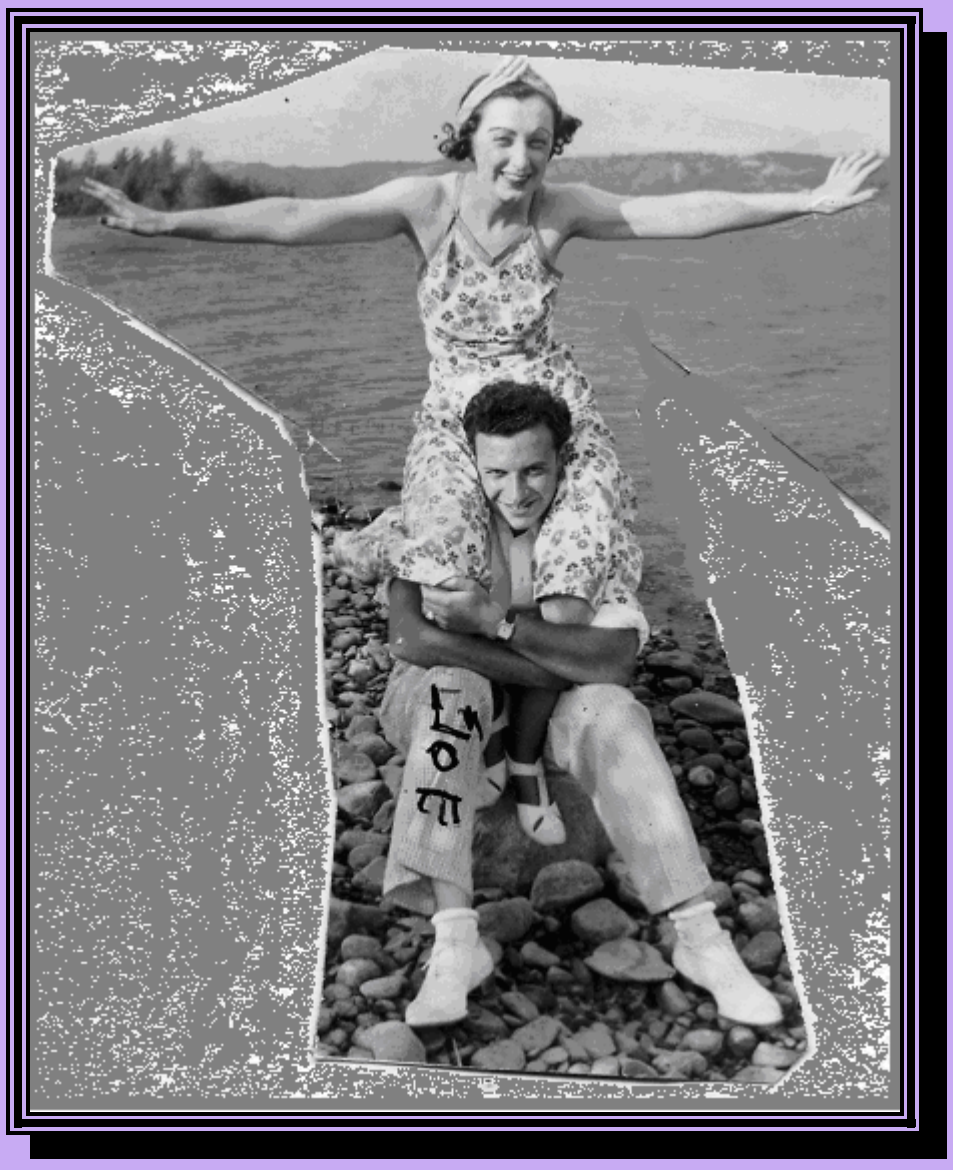
My Life:
In Bits and Pieces

Memoirs from 1911 to 2004



By Deena S. Jacobs

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I love you all, both individually and collectively. I am very proud of what we have accomplished together.

--dsj

I wrote these memoirs for my children, my grandchildren, my great-grandchildren and their heirs to know as much about my background and my family as I can recall. This is the Odds and Ends of my life, the good, the bad, and the in between.

Some people are just plain copycats. Bill Clinton and a popular singer both heard "My Life"—they scooped me and sent their life stories into *People* Magazine and were paid a lot of money. I definitely feel they owe me. But I will get in touch with the Better Business Bureau and take them to court. Plagarism is a criminal offense.

Chapter 1: My Parents

My parents were Ida Shapiro nee Steinberg and Abe Shapiro. My mom was born in New Haven, Connecticut and later moved to St. Paul with her parents. My dad was born in St. Paul, the capital of Minnesota. I do not know how they met, but I was born in Duluth, Minnesota on February 23, 1911. We moved from Duluth to St. Paul when I about three or four years old in order to be close to my mother's parents.

My dad came from a big family of Shapiros. Some had money, but we were the poor ones. I certainly didn't think so because I was never in need of anything. I did not know my paternal grandparents: I think they had passed away before I was born.

My dad's father married three times, so I had lots of aunts, uncles and cousins. Some were close—some were distant.

My dad's sisters were Annie and Deila, who lived in St. Paul. I knew my dad's sisters and their husbands as Aunt Annie Baer and Uncle Ike and Aunt Delia Segal and Uncle Jake. I set up my cousin Jerome (Aunt Annie and Uncle Ike's son) with my girlfriend Katie Gimbel and they married.



My mom and dad, Ida and Abe Shapiro,
on their honeymoon
(Glidden, Wisconsin, June 1910)

Aunt Delia had two daughters, Lucille and Marian. Lucille, was my dad's favorite niece. She had a warm personality and sang professionally on the radio in her younger years. She lived in New York. Lucille (Smith) married an Englishman, with a very broad English accent – I met him once. He passed away quite young. Marian settled in Minneapolis with her husband Lou Hoffman. I liked Marian very much and we were very close, but Joe's mom didn't like her because she would criticize the way I was raising my kids. Neither Lucille nor Marian had children.

My dad's brothers were Sam, Lou, Dave and Albert. Max was a half brother, but I never knew him. Sam's children, my first cousins, were Lorraine, Eleanor and Prentice. Eleanor was married to Arnold Royce and they lived in Minneapolis. Arnold was a shoe salesman. They had two sons; one, Bruce, was the same age as Alan. Dave had a son named Palmer and another daughter, Madyln, who passed away very young. My parents, Joe and I went to the funeral in Hibbing, Minnesota.

My dad's younger brother Lou was my favorite uncle. He lived in New York at the Knickerbocker Hotel. He was a manufacturer's representative of a very high class manufacturer of ladies ready-to-wear clothing. He visited us frequently, and I was the recipient of many lovely outfits from him. Uncle Lou and my dad were very close in their friendship, and my dad was also very close to my Uncle Dave. I was Uncle Lou's favorite niece. He gave me my trousseau and my beautiful going away suit, with fur. When Uncle Lou was a block away from our home, I could hear him whistle and I would run to meet him.

My dad also had two half sisters: Rae Shapiro, who never married, and Jennie Jacobs (no relation), who married and had one son. Rae and Jennie lived in a lovely home together. Jennie's son married and lived across the street from them. Aunt Rae was a wealthy business woman and owned and operated quite a large candy company called Superior Candy. As a wedding gift, she gave us a beautiful set of Haviland China Co. dishes made in France. They did not come with serving pieces but I used the silver serving pieces that I inherited from my mother. (My everyday China at the time was "Fiesta" – yellow and orange. Many years later, I saw them in a Marshall Field's dinnerware department. They had come back in style.)



"I started to look at some old pictures and I found one of my mother. She was beautiful. This picture must have been taken in 1908-09—I don't really know. It is a professional picture—big hat with a BIG bow on the large brim—soft-elbow length glove—color looks like the color of her stunning outfit."

My mother's parents, Rose and Louis Steinberg, were both born in Europe. I don't know what part of Europe they came from, because their background was never discussed in our household. I think it might have been Poland, but I'm not sure. My mother's parents eventually wound up in the States, year unknown. My mom had two sisters, Annie and Bertha, and three brothers, George, Abe and Jacob. Annie was my mom's younger sister. She was deaf and dumb and she must have been in her late 20s when she passed away.

My grandfather was very religious, and I understand from my aunt that he was mean to my grandmother. I don't remember him wearing a talice (prayer shawl). I remember him winding something around his right arm.

My Uncle Abe and his wife, my Aunt Rose, and their three children, Dorris, Lois, and David lived in Park Falls, Wisconsin. Uncle Abe was a salesman in a furniture store. They visited us often in St. Paul. I was sometimes annoyed with Aunt Rose because she would leave her three kids with my mother and she would go off shopping or visiting relatives.

The one time that I visited them in Park Falls, I was out taking a walk by myself and saw a beautiful dog. I called to him and that was a wrong move, because as he started running towards me, his owner yelled at him to come back home. I was extremely frightened and I think I learned not to call strange dogs. I had another unpleasant experience in Park Falls when I was out picking blueberries and I was stung by a bee. That was a real owie.

I was close with their three children. David served in the army, and I would very often get mail from him. He married and his wife was very ill. I eventually lost touch with him. Dorris married Marvin Winkelman and they lived in St. Ignace, Michigan. They had two children, but I don't remember their names. I think Dorris passed away quite some time ago.

Lois also lived in West Rogers Park and they owned a home on Lunt, where we were close neighbors. She married a very religious man, Edward Klein (who was a complete jerk), and she became very religious also. I took her shopping at the Jewel about every other week, and when we returned home I helped her schlep the groceries into her house. I think they had two children, a boy and a girl, and their children went to the yeshiva, the Jewish schools where they spoke only Hebrew. Their daughter moved to Israel, and they all eventually moved there too.



Aunt Berdie, my mom's sister

My maternal grandparents owned a two-story building at 452 Carrol Street in St. Paul. My parents and I lived on the second floor and my grandparents lived downstairs with Bertha (Aunt Berdie) and Annie, and George (Uncle George).

Our apartment included a kitchen, one bathroom, one bedroom, and an alcove (off the living room) where I slept on a couch. I didn't have a bedroom until I was married. I shared two bedroom closets with my parents. My phone number was Dale 9120 (the old black "hang up" phone, where you gave the operator the number and she got it for you).

The bathrooms had chain pulls to flush the toilets, a big tub on feet, a huge mirror, a cabinet from floor to ceiling for linens, and no sink. I often wondered how I brushed my teeth and washed my face and hands. I guess we had to use the kitchen sink. This is strange because there was a sink in the downstairs apartment. A shed in the backyard for shovels, working materials, clotheslines, pins, etc. There was an alley in the backyard and men rode along on horses – yelling their wares – potatoes, onions, tomatoes, etc. We would hear them and come down to make our purchases.

There was a stable for horses a block away. Later, it was used for a Holy Rollers group, and I don't remember anything more about that. There was a nice grocery store a block away: milk 5 cents a quart, bread a dime a loaf, etc. There were lamp posts for street lights and men would light them in the evening and return in the morning to put them out. The neighborhood was black, white, Christian, Jewish: never any problems.

I remember sitting around my grandmother's dining room for the holidays, but it wasn't Chanukah – we didn't know about Chanukah then – it must have been Rosh Hashanah and Yum Kippur.


Me

My two good friends at that time were Mary Miller and Eva Lasman. I looked Eva up years later when Joe and I were in California. She was so changed and just seemed to be bitter about her life.

The grade school was practically across the street, and I was told I barely got in before the last bell rang.

At 15 years, I was still wearing long curls—my mother used to make them—and my dad was very disappointed when I cut my hair short.

I roller skated (never ice skated), never learned how to swim, but I did ride a bike.

I recall Miss Wilkinson, my third grade teacher, once made me sit under her desk for talking too much.

There was no junior high in those years. Kindergarten through 8th. There were two high schools: Central and Mechanic Arts. I went to Central. It was walking distance, but if I got a late start, my mom would give me a dime for the street car. I graduated at 18 and went to Globe Business College, where I improved my typing and shorthand – which I used later when I had 2 office jobs.

My first job out of high school was in the office at Montgomery Wards, where I typed orders on the old Underwood typewriter. Such typewriters are probably antiques by now. I was paid $12 a week. My second job was at the Oriental Rug Company, manning the office calls. My third and last job was at Newman's Department Store (Small Ladies Ready to Wear). I was working there when I met Joe. I not only sold but also worked in the office on the second floor and learned how to be a switchboard telephone operator. The telephones were the old plug in kind, which were black with a hang up hearing piece (I saw a movie years ago where the leading lady operated this kind of phone). Plug-in errors were easy to make, and I'm sure I made some. At $15 a week, I purchased my mom her first refrigerator, probably $10 down and a couple of dollars a month until the balance was paid off. The refrigerator replaced the ice box and the ice man, who carried the ice on his leathered back and used tongs to put the ice in the ice box.


My mom and her horse, Glidden, Wisconsin, July 1908

There were big yellow street cars at 10 cents a ride and 3 cents for a transfer (I'm not sure of these amounts). You stepped up on a landing and dropped your coins in a big black container. There was a conductor and a motorman.

I can remember my mom washing clothes downstairs in grandma's kitchen,

using big metal wash tubs and a large scrub board. If the weather was sunny, we hung the clothes out in the backyard on the clotheslines. If not, my mom (and later I helped) would have to carry the baskets up to our big attic where there were clothes lines. There were lots of stairs. It was quite a climb up.

There was no basement. There was a big cellar with lots of black dirt on the floor. The house was heated by a big black furnace, and George would shovel coal into it.

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When we lived in Duluth, my dad managed a baseball team and I have a snapshot of my mom wearing a sweater with the team's logo on it. In nearly every picture we had of my father, he was smoking a cigar.

My parents were a very affectionate couple. I can remember lots of kissing and hugging between us.

My parents were very warm outgoing people with lots of friends who were my aunts and uncles.

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A little about my mother's musical background. Before she was married, she worked in a music department of a department store, the Emporium, in downtown St. Paul playing the piano and selling the sheet music of the popular songs of the day. The Orpheum Theatre was nearby and occasionally one of the performing singers would come in and ask her to play their songs, which she did and the singer would give her an autographed copy of the song. People shopping in the store at the time would hear the music and come over – in many instances they would buy the music.



My parents and I in front of our house on
452 Carrol Street, Minneapolis

Our piano in St. Paul was an old type of upright Fisher style. When mom moved into an apartment with Aunt Bernie and George, she bought a spinet Baldwin piano – part of it is shown on a snap with me standing by the side of it.

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My dad passed away at the age of 49, when I was 27. He worked for Monarch Finer Foods, a big grocery company. He was a city salesman and called on local grocery stores. He came home one night and told my mom he didn't feel good and went to bed. Mom called the doctor who gave him a shot and he died immediately after the shot. Just before though, my dad told my mom to send his orders into his company. I've always felt that if this had happened today with the medical knowledge that we have, there might have been a different outcome.

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Aunt Berdie worked for the Hamm Brewing Co. for 25 years and received her discharge and the usual gold watch. She never married. She and my mom were as close as two sisters could

possibly be, and she was always wonderful to me in many ways, but at times I didn't appreciate her, as she would scold me for misbehaving.

When my mother passed away, Aunt Berdie lived with Joe and me in Minneapolis until Alan was born. Then she returned to St. Paul and lived with friends.

My mother and her brother were both asphyxiated by smoke when a fire broke out in the basement of their apartment. I'll never forget this tragedy. Joe and I lived in Minneapolis at the time, and when we were notified of the fire, we woke up a neighbor who stayed with Alan. We broke every driving law getting to St. Paul. I would have appreciated a cop stopping us for speeding. I know he would have gotten us there fast, but we weren't in time, and both were gone when we arrived. Aunt Berdie was carried out of her bedroom window by a fireman and that is when she came to live with us.

There was a double funeral. I think this was 1942 or '43.

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My children, in fact my whole family, have missed so much by not knowing my Dad, Mom and Aunt Berdie.

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Many many years ago, I asked Joe to take me to St. Paul, as I wanted to visit my old neighborhood on Carrol Street, and what a shock it was. The street that I remembered wasn't there. My side of the street wasn't bad but the other side of the street had been demolished. No school, no old homes—it had become an expressway. We did stop at my former address, 452 Carol, but now the building had two entrances. Before, one entrance led us inside and we could go into my grandmother's apartment on the first floor or take the stairs up to our apartment on the second floor. A woman answered my ring and I introduced myself and explained the purpose of my being there. Well, she was very pleasant, said she'd like to show us the apartment but she had company and wouldn't have time, and that was that. Central High School was still there, but it wasn't a school anymore. The expressway ran between St. Paul and Minneapolis and eventually became called the Twin Cities. Hard to believe that I had once lived in that area for 25 years.

Joe and I – 1936



Chapter 2: Joe & I

I met my good-looking husband-to-be in 1933 at a Yom Kippur dance in Minneapolis. My date was a guy from St. Paul. But the guys exchanged dances and I wound up going home with Joe. I think my date took another girl home. This was the beginning of our "romance."

We dated from 1933 to 1937, when we married. We got together every Tuesday and Saturday night. I can't recall how old he was, younger than I. Oh yes, he told me that he was 22, and I

found out much later, he was only 20. These numbers can be wrong. I was 25. He was much too young.

He bought a good second hand car for $90 and we always drove back to Minneapolis from St. Paul. Those were the days of great friendships with the Smiths, Segals, Jack and Bea Greenberg, and two other couples.

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During my dating days with Joe, we would go to the Wednesday night wrestling matches. Wednesday, because it was free for women. I hated it – it seemed so brutal. I learned in time that some of it was faked to cause excitement.

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In my dating days, "we necked" (now it's called "making out"). We would be sitting in our living room on the couch. Around 10 p.m., my dad would walk in winding a clock. Joe got the message and went home.

When we necked in the car in St. Paul, there was a lamppost directly across the street. I could see my Uncle George standing in the living room window trying to peer out (crazy things I remember).

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During this same time that I was dating Joe, I was having a long-distance phone and correspondence romance with Gus Frye who lived in Crosby, Minnesota. We met through his aunt and mine (Aunt Berdie). He was a great guy and didn't deserve the "Dear John" letter I wrote him after Joe and I became engaged, an admission I'm not proud of. Years later I saw him at Marshal Fields. I hailed him and said "Hi Gus." He looked at me, turned his head, and kept on walking! ! !

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Joe gave me my beautiful engagement ring in 1936 (I think) and we married on October 24, 1937 in a simple ceremony in the Rabbi's study.

The wedding plans were cancelled, as I was in mourning for my dad, who passed away a month before from a heart attack. He was 49. He and Joe had a great relationship. Both were sports-minded and both were in the grocery field.



Aunt Francis Steinberg, My Uncle Jake Steinberg
(my mother's oldest brother), Cousin Flo Seibler, Joe and I
Oct 10, 1937, Detroit, Michigan – in front of Uncle Jake's home

My Uncle Lou had ordered a bridal gown for me, which was cancelled, of course, when I told him about my dad. But he gave me a blue wedding suit, which was stunning. The collars and cuff were black Persian and it had a matching hats (like the Cossack hats that the Russians wore).

My mother, Aunt Berdie, George, Joe's folks and two daughters, and my wonderful Uncle Lou attended the ceremony. Uncle Lou arrived from New York in an elegant suit

with a white mum in his lapel to give me away. I don't remember who the rabbi was.

I certainly did not come with a dowry, but I had some wealthy relatives and so did Joe, and we wound up with some beautiful gifts and cash.

My mom gave us the family car, which was practically new. After the ceremony, we left the latter part of the afternoon and drove to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where my cousin, David Steinberg, went to the University of Wisconsin. We visited with him and drove on to Detroit, Michigan and visited relatives, including Aunt Frances, Uncle Jake's wife, who made the beautiful needlepoint covering my good-looking chair. The chair was a gift from my mom for our 5th Anniversary (wood is the 5th year). I have the chair I refer to here in my bedroom now and I love it for many reasons.

We drove on to Chicago and stayed at the Congress Hotel. No big time honeymoon excitement, as I was in mourning for my dad. We only stayed one week and went sightseeing, but it was a lovely week.

When we returned, we lived with my mother for one year as I wanted to stay with her until she and Aunt Berdie decided what future living arrangements would be made. Their big home was now not necessary. Joe drove back and forth to Minneapolis, where he worked in the grocery store that his dad owned. Joe's friends became my friends too, and we had some wonderful happy years there. We didn't pay mom rent, but Joe brought all the groceries from his dad's store.



Joe's mother and father,
Maimi and Ben Jacobs

We always went back to Minneapolis from St. Paul to be with Joe's friends, the Greenbergs, the Smiths, and the Siegals.

We certainly didn't have very much money. Joe's dad owned this very nice large grocery store on Chicago Avenue, and Joe worked for him and was paid $25 a week, plus groceries. This wasn't okay with Joe, who left with no hard feelings between them, and he got his first luggage line.

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Joe and I both lucked out with our parents-in-law. We were accepted by both sides with love. He and my dad were great pals. They both talked the same language – sports, sales, etc.

His folks had a very very lovely home in South Minneapolis, 3442 11th Avenue South. There was a beautiful oriental rug in the living room and his mother looked like the typical matriarch – hair groomed – wonderful cook and hostess and always in high heels and the little half apron. June and Goldie, his sisters, were both college graduates. I gave his dad a lot of credit – he had no formal education, but he bought their home and the grocery store building and put two daughters through college.

There was a snapshot of Grandpa Jacobs washing the dinner dishes (I can't understand how that came about). It's cute and he's smiling – very nice. My favorite papa-in-law.

When my father-in-law passed away, Joe's mom moved from her home to an apartment in St. Louis Park on Minnetonka Blvd. and lived there independently until she died. She was a walker, and weather permitting, she could be seen walking in the area of apartment. She always said that she wanted to live long enough to attend her great-grandson David's bar mitzvah, which she did at the age of 90. Joe flew into Minneapolis, brought her to Chicago for the occasion and flew her home

the next day – she passed away shortly thereafter. Dave didn't like going to Hebrew School and to get him Bar Mitzvahed, his parents, Alan and Adi, had him tutored and he did a good job.
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We moved later from St. Paul to our first apartment in Minneapolis on Emerson Ave., where Alan was born in 1941. This first home in Minneapolis was a one-bedroom apartment with a living room, which contained a nice mahogany drop-leaf table, small kitchen and bath.

When we lived on Emerson, there was a synagogue at the back of the building, with an alley in between. I went to back my car into the alley and backed into the synagogue. No damage to that building, but I had a fender bender.

Joe's friends became mine, Bea and Jack Greenberg, Lou and Esther Smith (Lou and his brother Sam owned the well-known successful Great Northern Market in Minneapolis).

My moves
Duluth
St. Paul – 452 Carrol Ave.
Minneapolis
-DuPont Avenue South
-3512 Emerson (Alan born here)
-5328 South Irving (Ilene born here)
Chicago
-2540 Estes Ave.
-Winston Towers
Kingsley
Oak Park Arms – Apts. 353, 248 (large bedroom, good territory)

Jack Greenberg in later years became President of the Variety Club, an organization which gave a great deal of money for children's heart hospitals. He was Executive Director for over 41 years. Joe also joined the Variety Club but was not active. Joe's life then was bowling and the card games gin and poker.

Jack and Bea divorced in later years. Jack had a "girlfriend", very nice, and we double dated for years. He and his girlfriend were on a cruise and they were having drinks at the bar. She was talking to a friend and she turned around. Jack had a stroke or heart attack and flipped over backwards and hit the floor, and he was gone. Alan once said "That's the way he wanted to go, with a drink in one hand and his dancing shoes on his feet."

Dr. Leo Greenberg was not only Joe's very good friend. Joe had a different doctor because of his insurance but Joe's doctor made a mistake once with a diagnosis. Joe became very ill, and I called Dr. Greenberg who saved his life. Leo and his wife Angie lived in Winston too. As a younger woman, Angie was a nurse.


Joe and I with Rose and Syd Verbin

One vacation time we went to Mexico with Leo and Angie and that's when we saw a bull fight. Leo told us not to drink the water.

Later in life, Angie had a lung problem and was attached to an oxygen tank and had to schlep around the apartment pulling it behind her. After she passed away, Leo had a girlfriend and they are still together. However, Leo has lost his eyesight at this time, but he and his girlfriend are still maintaining an apartment together. She of course does all the driving.

Rose and Syd Verbin were our very close friends who moved to San Diego from Chicago. We visited the Verbins after they

moved. They had a good marriage, and he did remarry after Rose passed away. That was also a good marriage. Both wives were great gals and super cooks. The Verbins had two daughters. A tragedy there was that his oldest daughter, named Andrea, developed M.S. (I believe). A professional therapist was hired to help her through the rough time. She was very young when she passed away.

Joe got a job with the American Tourister Company and was with them for 35 years. He had to quit because of the 65-year age limit.

Jack, Leo and Syd all passed away before Joe. I believe the loss of his three good friends, the loss of a job and his estrangement with Alan caused Joe's massive stroke. To me that was a reminder of the movie "The Death of a Salesman."

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Joe always called me JIM, which he picked up from my dad. I had a very good relationship with my parents. My dad was a traveling salesman and he always kept in touch via phone and mail. My dad was a pretty good letter writer. My envelopes were usually addressed to Miss Jim Shapiro and the salutation was "Hello Honey!" However, if he had been informed that I had given my mother a hard time, mail was addressed to Miss Deena Shapiro and a lashing via mail that hurt. My parents were pretty strict with me in spite of the fact that I was an only child. I can remember my mother chasing me around the dining room table with a cat of nine tails, which was a leather strap. She could never catch me of course. Joe would tell our friends that my folks spoiled me. I honestly can't recall if I got spanked when it was called for. I kind of have a hunch that I did.



From 1961, I have a snapshot showing Joe wiping dishes that I had washed. My caption underneath says *"This is a picture for posterity as this may never happen again. Pappy is not a kitchen lad."*

I don't know where the "Jim" came from.

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Joe was not a handy man around the house. He said that he had to make enough money to pay for the things that he didn't know how to do and like many men of his generation, house chores were not his bag. I recall watching Alan helping Janice serve when we were there for dinner and also helping with the dishes and putting them away.

My dad and I would help my mother. She would wash, he and I would wipe the dishes, and I would put them away.

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Joe had tunnel vision. He could only see out of the sides of his eyes. It's amazing that he never had a car accident. He didn't tell me about this problem until years later. He passed all the requirements for safe driving and had stickers to prove it.

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Joe's aunt and uncle, Goldie Malkoff and her husband, owned a restaurant called the Malkoff's Delicatessen in Minneapolis. It was a very popular Jewish delicatessen. Eva, who was Goldie's sister, worked at the restaurant. Goldie and her husband had a son, Sonny Malkoff, who passed away very young. When the Malkoffs left Minneapolis, they moved to Phoenix.

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Joe was gone from home for long periods of time. He had too much territory to cover. So, I practically raised Ilene and Alan alone. Joe was a good husband – never questioned my purchases and left me well provided for.



Me with Alan (3 years)

Chapter 3: Babies

Alan was born on April 25, 1941 in Minneapolis. He is named after my dad, Abe. Ilene was born on January 17, 1945. She is named after my mother, Ida (It was – and maybe still is – a Jewish custom to name the new baby after someone who has passed away, and both my parents were gone).

I had a lady who was supposed to take care of the baby and bring Alan to me to be nursed at night, but she was a sound sleeper and never heard the baby cry, but I did and went and picked him up to be nursed. I was one big pregnant lady – all stomach – no behind. I was so heavy and uncomfortable, I used some kind of garment to help hold up my Tummy. Alan weighed in at 7 pounds, 7 oz., 21 inches long. I believe Ilene was 6 ½ pounds.

Both were beautiful babies. Joe's mom once thought I should have a third child (like she did). I said "No. God gave me two okay babies and I am going to quit while I'm ahead." I never regretted my decision.

Ilene was born when we lived on Estes Ave. in Bess Helfand's house in Chicago. I remember a picture of Alan leaning over Ilene's crib and looking at her and smiling.

Growing up – they had their usual kid fights. Now, they are good friends. He is good to her and to me – Amen!

Chapter 4: Our very nice Three Bedroom Home in Minneapolis

Our home was on 5328 South Irving on the South side of Minneapolis. Sheba was our loved pet then –a little black cocker spaniel. Ilene made friends with the girls across the street, Judy and Karen Perlman (mother: Bea Perlman; father: James Perlman). Ilene and Judy would walk to school together and became great pals. Ilene felt utterly lost when the Perlmans moved to California. There were no other children in the area.

When she was 10 or 11 years old, Ilene was invited to visit them and we put her on a plane all by herself. We walked her to her seat and as the plane took off, we saw her through the window, reading a book like a professional airplane traveler, very grown up (it's in the genes!). When I called to talk to her while she was visiting the Perlmans, she said she couldn't talk to me because she was so busy playing cards. She wasn't the least bit lonesome being so far away from home for the first time.

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Ilene, Alan, and Marsha

We had so many happy Chanukah days when we lived in Minneapolis. We had a fireplace, and we put white and blue streamers leading from each child's initial to the children's gifts for Chanukah.

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The two pictures that hang over the wall here above my bed, "Elena and Chico," hung over Ilene's crib in Minneapolis.

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Baskets on Our Bikes

When we lived in Minneapolis, Ilene, Alan and I each had a bike. I remember Alan's happy day when he got his first two wheeler bike and Ilene got a tricycle.

When Joe was out of town on weekends, we'd hop on our bikes and take off for Lake Calhoun Beach. We ate our packed lunches, spent the afternoon and went back home pleasantly tired. We left our bikes in a garage. Minneapolis is a beautiful city surrounded by many lakes. One that I remembered is Lake Calhoun.

In that same area, there was a famous restaurant that we used to go to called the Rainbow.



Alan and Ilene – Summer of 1948

Chapter 5: Estes

We moved to Chicago in 1956 and American Tourister paid all our traveling expenses. The move was brought about because Chicago was Joe's home base for the cities that he sold luggage to. Joe was with American Tourister for 35 years.

I was friends with Shirley Goldberg from back when we both lived in St. Paul. Our parents were extremely close friends. Her dad was a fireman. Shirley and Ed Goldberg moved to Chicago. We kept in touch with Shirley while we were in St. Paul. When I called Shirley and told her we were moving to Chicago in 1956, she immediately started looking for an apartment for us. She was the one who found us our two-flat on Estes in Chicago. We lived close by and were such good friends. They became like our Kissin' Cousins. She passed away very young and so did he. They didn't have children.

The house was a brick modern two-flat, one of several on the block. Inside, there were three bedrooms. There was a master bedroom, which Joe and I shared, Ilene's bedroom across the hall and Alan's bedroom was in the rear next to the kitchen. There was a dine-in kitchen and the living room was decorated in modern décor and there was a den with a t.v. and couches where we often watched t.v. on t.v. tables. We lived there until 1970 when we moved to Winston Towers.

Our address was 2540 Estes in west Rogers Park. Estes and Rockwell were surrounded by a beautiful park called Indian Boundary Park. At that time, there was a nice small zoo with monkeys, a baby bear, a little horse, etc. across the street which could be seen from our windows. One distraction was the horrible racket coming from a beautiful peacock, which screeched. They eventually had to get rid of it because it was so noisy. There was also a pool where kids waded. There were swings and teeter totters. The area was big – surrounded by 4 streets. What a beautiful area to live.

****

When we first moved to Chicago, Shirley and Ed gave us two adorable parakeets for a housewarming gift. I'd let them out of the cage and they'd fly around the kitchen. I had a picture of

Alan sitting on the couch in the living room holding one of the birds on his finger and our poodle Taper is sitting next to him. I wrote on the picture as if Alan was speaking and he said "No, Taper. This bird is not for your lunch."

****

When we lived on Estes, we had a swing in our backyard. There were two seats. Ilene was either swinging or climbing up the post. A neighbor once told me Ilene was going to wind up in a circus. She didn't wind up in a circus, but one day at Grandma Jacob's, Alan and Marsha dared Ilene that she wouldn't jump off the railing of the porch and try to fly—she did—she fell and twisted her ankle.



Joe and I at the wedding of Bess Helfand's son on Estes (Nov. 1962)

****

Our landlady, Bess Halfand, gave a beautiful luncheon engagement party for Alan and Adi. Her gift was a real handsome rolling pin, completely covered with pennies, and the card read "Hope you're always rolling in dough."

When Bess Helfand's son, was going to be married, she asked me if the reception could be held in our apartment. They lived on the first floor. I, of course, said yes and it was beautifully catered. It was at dinner time. I wore a black short sleeved cocktail dress. I looked good. (Such braggadochio!).



Florida – Christmas 1959
Grandma Jacobs, Joe, and me

****

Back to the present—Alan just phoned on June 1st '04 to thank me for his Father's Day Card.

****

Going back again (are you getting dizzy?).

When we lived in Chicago on Estes, Francis Buegen (Jack) and son Bob lived a block away. I don't know how we got together, but she said if I did her correspondence (She was in home furnishing – she would do my apartment with no charge). She sold my old furniture and took me to Merchandise Mart where I ordered a big three pillow orange couch with arms, a Big Green high backed chair and the orange love seat which I have here now in the Arms.

****

The first beauty shop in Chicago for me was Milton and Mary, a Mama and Papa beauty salon on Lincoln Avenue. They gave me my first color job. It came out a lousy shade of blonde or auburn, forgot which. It was horrible and I never went back.

Some time later, Katy, my operator for 30 years, bought the shop, and I stayed with them until I came here to the Arms. Here the beauty shop and barber shop are on the first floor – very handy.

****

One year, the American Tourister Company had a sales meeting in Florida. We stayed at the Diplomat Motel. Joe got his friend Mort Weinberg, our friend from Minneapolis, a job with the Tourister Company. His wife Mollie and I met the guys in Florida. After the meeting was over, it was okay to make it play time too. I think Alan was there too.

****

Joe's 50th Birthday Celebration

Joe's 50th birthday celebration was held in our home at 2540 Estes in Chicago's North side in 1964. We three gave the party which included Joe's Mom (Mamie), Angie and Leo Greenberg, Shirley and Ed Goldberg, Esther and Lou Smith, Rose and Syd Verbin, and Jack and Bea Greenberg. I know it was an evening party. I didn't cook, so I probably ordered in trays.



Adi, Alan, Ilene, Myself, and Grandma Jacobs with Joe on his 50th Birthday

****

Thirtieth Anniversary & Good Friends

In 1967, Alan and Ilene gave us a 30th Anniversary party. We were living on Estes in Chicago. The Segals, Smiths and Greenbergs came in from Minneapolis and Shirley and Ed Golberg and the Verbins came from Chicago.

The party had a beautiful beginning but a sad ending. Joe had too many drinks and congratulations, and he became violently ill and passed out into his bed. He never saw the end of his party. This was strange because he never was a heavy drinker. When he did, his drink of choice was Jack Daniels. In his later years, he drank only Virgin Marys following doctor's orders

Chapter 6: Ilene and Alan

When we moved onto Estes Avenue, Alan made a friend living two doors away. Somehow they rigged up a telephone communication apparatus – with wires that enabled them to use regular phones and talk to each other – with wires from the back of our apartment to the back of his apartment. Dunno how they did it, but it was great fun for them and very clever.

****

One of Alan's boyhood friends was Bob Pastern. Alan belonged to the Big Brother's organization (I believe this was the time he and Adi lived in Kalamazoo, Michigan). Kevin, Alan's "Little Brother," visited Alan as a young adult and he is now married with children.

****

At Alan's 13th birthday, the guests were Dick Goldman and the rest of our family. I didn't know about big Bar Mitzvah affairs then. I'd never been to one.

****

Ilene wasn't too happy when she started school in Chicago. The 13 year old girls there were very sophisticated – already smoking. I found this out when I found an ash tray under Ilene's bed. But she was a small-town girl, and they gave her a hard time.

One who was nice was Donna Wolf, and Ilene and Donna were very good friends in high school. Ibbey Wolf, Donna's Mom, was a clothes closet designer and Ibbey offered to design our

closets as a "moving in gift" and it was wonderful. His and Her sides. Joe's side – upper rod for shirts (sport), dress shifts were professionally washed (no starched collars). The sliding door in the den was also good – one side designed for the three dining room table boards and pads.
****

Ilene attended Sunday School and was confirmed in the Beth El Synagogue in Chicago at 14 years. She had a 16th birthday party, and as a gift, we gave her her own phone. Alan already had his.
****

My Mothers Day Address

One score years ago (and one score minus four years ago), you, Mother, brought forth to this family a baby boy and girl, conceived in love and dedicated to the proposition of bringing you endless joy, pride and aggravation.

Today, we are engaged in great family war, testing whether you, Mother, or any mother, having children so conceived and so dedicated can long endure them.

We dedicate this day to you Mom, for your efforts that our family might live in happiness, humor and confusion.

It is altogether fitting and proper that we do this. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this day, for you have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract.

The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but our family can never forget what you have done here.

It is for us, your children, rather to be dedicated to the job which you have so advanced:

That we take greater efforts to keep the peace of the family and be sources of pride and joy rather than one of sorrow and aggravation; That we take increased consideration just as you have given us that last measure of consideration; That we highly resolve that this household—under mother—by Father and for the children—shall endure forever in peace!

—Ilene, 16, daughter of Mrs. Joe Jacobs, 2540 Estes,

Ilene's Mothers Day Address at 16 (see box). Story with it: Joe and I were leaving our apartment for the evening. I asked Ilene to do the dishes and please clean up the kitchen. When we came home, nothing was done and I yelled at her. I really lashed out, and then I went to bed. The next morning at the breakfast table, I found a beautifully wrapped scroll. When I unfold it, it had My Mothers Day Address. Ilene was 16 at the time. I felt so bad that I had scolded her. I was so impressed and loved it so much, I sent it to the local neighborhood paper – and they printed it. The original, yellow with age now, is in my big album.

****

Ilene and Alan both went to Sullivan High School in Chicago. Alan then to University of Illinois (first Navy Pier and then downstate, where he graduated in 1962) and Ilene to Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois for two years. She graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1966 (where she lived with her grandmother one summer. Not too happy a time because her grandmother didn't approve of several of her dates. They weren't Jewish.)
****

High school and College fun stuff:

1958: Alan took Carol Commander to the Walk of Hope dance. The following year, he took Peggy Franks. Alan's junior prom date was Shelley Weisman.

1961: Ilene's Lane High School prom with Gary Guth. He was so crazy about her, and now he has a Ph.D. in computers.

1961: Fraternity dance with Barry Adler.



Alan's high school graduation (1959)

Ilene was the Feature Editor of the Sentinel High School Paper.
1963: A million dollar fire at Bradley University
1963: Ilene was initiated into the SDT sorority.
****

Alan had my car for Friday nite dates if we had no mother and son conflicts.
****

When she was a high school senior, Ilene directed a skit comprised of 30 other high school seniors. It was a musical entitled "Raising Kids for Fun and Profit," and the students sang and danced for their parents.

Alan had the lead in a musical "Come Blow Your Horn" when he was at the University of Illinois in Champaign. Naturally, he was great – a born actor.
****

One summer's vacation – Alan was a cab driver and Ilene a waitress (I bragged!!). While Alan was at the University of Illinois, he got an allowance from Joe, but he was dating and needed more so he got a job driving a cab one summer.

Not only did Alan drive a cab – but he polished shoes. The guys would leave their shoes at their door and Alan would pick them up – POLISH and return them. Now I don't think I'm dreaming this up.
****



Joe and Alan at Alan's graduation from the University of Illinois (1962)

We all came to Alan's graduation from Illinois in 1962, including Aunt Berdie and Adrienne. After Alan graduated from College, he went to work for the Sutherland Paper Company, located in Kalamazoo, Michigan, which was Adi's and his first home. Adi graduated shortly after Alan, from Western Michigan in Kalamazoo.

Alan later came to work at Carson's in the luggage department. Joe helped Alan to get that job. During his job at Carson's, he became very friendly with the manager of the department and, to this day, he and his wife and Janice and Alan are close friends. They now live in California and visit back and forth. When I shopped at Carson's, I would stop by the luggage department occasionally and if Alan was not busy we would talk for a few minutes. If he was busy with a customer, I would get a kick out of listening to his sales pitch. I would pretend that I was interested in the various cases on the floor as a potential buyer. I think when he left Carsons is when he joined Joe with the American Tourister Luggage Company where he worked there for about 15 years when he left to become his own entrepreneur. Alan is a very successful manufacturer's rep in the luggage business.

Alan has been very good to me throughout the years and, while Alan and Ilene have not been very close, he has also been very generous to her and to Miranda.

****

One time the Tourister Duet, Alan and Joe, had a very successful year and we all celebrated by going to a very fancy French restaurant. I think if I remember we went up stairs in an elevator to the dining room. Alan did the ordering of the wine and I was so impressed when the waiter came over with the wine bottle and had Alan smell the cork – guess the vintage year was okay.

****

Ilene was President of her sorority at Bradley, Sigma Delta Tau. Alan opted not to join a fraternity.

When she was a freshman in college, Ilene's sorority participated in the stationary float contest. Ilene was Chairman of the float and her sorority won second place.

****

In 1962, on our 25th Anniversary, Joe and I spent a week at Bradley. Adi drove up with Joe and me and Alan came in from Champaign. Drake University was playing football with Bradley that day. Bradley lost.

We had received a wire before we left for Bradley which read "Taking time from the Cuban situation to extend you my congratulations. Congratulations. See you at the polls. Signed, JFK." (Guess who? Ilene, of course).

****

In 1963, Ilene got a letter of congratulations and best wishes for her success in the future from the Vice President of Academic Affairs, ER Kuckel, congratulating her on her academic work at Bradley. She was on the honor society and there was a convocation from the Dean of Students held for honoring students who were members of the honor societies.

In 1963, the Dean of Students, Leslie H. Tucker, told her how to dress appropriately. It doesn't say what she was wearing that caused the comment.

I recall one occasion when Joe and I went to Bradley for a Parents Day get together. I wore a pretty mink stole. Ilene was terribly mortified, as she thought I looked "ostentatious."

I also remember her hysterics on another occasion when I told her I had given her beloved Taper, our poodle, to Sandy (Adi's sister) because I didn't have the time to do dog walking. Like Mitzi and me, she and Taper slept together. To make matters more heartbreaking, a couple of years later we were all invited to the Hoffman's for a holiday dinner. When we walked in the door Taper was in the lower level. He heard my voice and shot up the stairs, jumped all over me (ever hear a dog whimper! he did and completely ignored Ilene. But I was the one who fed him and that was the answer).

This was the dog Joe won for being one of the top salesman with the American Tourister Luggage Company.

Taper was flown in from Marblehead, Massachusetts in a little cage. Ilene and Alan picked him very early on a Sunday morning at Midway Airport. They brought him in and threw him down on our bed.

He was an adorable little bit of black fur that eventually turned grey. Joe was disappointed – I guess he thought we were getting a Saint Bernard.



Taper and I – on Estes

****

It was Bobby Beugan and Joe who thought Ilene should go to the University of Minnesota. This was not a happy time for her. She had first attended Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois. She always said it was a "play school," and when she transferred to Minnesota it was a hard time.

****

When Ilene graduated from the University of Minnesota, the exercises were held indoors in the kitchen because there had been a terrific storm and the grounds were soaked. We all stood up, and the proceedings were heard over the PA.

Ilene's first job was at Ryerson Steel in 1966. She was the Secretary to the Marketing Manager and was typing one day and made a mistake and said the four-letter s--- word. She happened to look up and her boss was reading what she had written. Embarrassed. Oh yeh!!!

In 1968, she worked at University of Chicago Law School. In 1969, she was a Public Relations Manager. She received her Masters in Social Work in June 1974. She later was a federal probation officer, but she didn't enjoy that job because she didn't like sending men to jail.

She lived in the Carl Sandberg village in Chicago with a roommate. She is currently working in Oak Park for Lutheran Child and Family Services at 120 South Marion. Ilene's address is 433 S. Lombard, Apt. 28 and has been there for 24 years.



Joe and I with Ilene at the University of Minnesota (1965)

****

I remember Alan's very first apartment. I can't remember the address. We were there for dinner and I don't know what he served. He had a lot of mugs hanging on the wall (wonder where they went), but he gave me two white mugs with an insignia that said "Lake Shore Ltd" which I have now. That was his company at the time.

****

Janice and Alan also own a beautiful home in Michigan City with a hot tub, two big sinks in the kitchen, a sunken living room, a fireplace, and she had a stunning bedspread on the bed the day that I was first there. There was a gadget in the sink which held up bananas – I'd never seen one before.

Their present prestigious address is 474 North Lakeshore Drive in Chicago. Janice drives a Jaguar and Alan did drive a Lexus. I have forgotten the name of his present car.

****

Today it's June 20th, 2004 and I can't sleep anymore. It's 5 a.m. My head is too full of trying to remember what I forgot to add to my memoirs so far, like my visit to Janice and Alan's beautiful home in Michigan City on September 23, 2000. My transportation was a black stretch limo. The driver dropped me off and returned later to pick me up. It was a gorgeous day. Everything was going great until their cat Squeaky disappeared into the bushes surrounding their home and Janice had a panic attack trying to find him.

While living at Winston, Janice and Alan brought Squeaky to visit me. Squeaky wanted to be friendly with Mitzi, but Mitzi didn't like the competition and opened her mouth with a big hiss and ran under the table.


In a black stretch limo en route to Alan and Janice's home in Michigan City (2000)

Back to the Michigan house – while we were there, Janice was busy preparing a huge beautiful vegetable salad on a BIG round cutting board.

I believe Marcela was with me. I'm not sure. She and Ilene were with me when we were guests at their Lake Shore Drive apartment. I saw my first real hot tub—I'd only seen them in the movies and the VIEW from Alan and Janice's apartment window was awesome. I could see the Big Wheel at Navy Pier and beautiful Lake Michigan. They had beautiful blue leather furniture. His and Hers offices – B I G T.V. And Alan showed us family pictures! It was a delightful afternoon.

Alan is on the 56th floor. He has a balcony but Ilene wouldn't venture out because she has vertigo. Alan met us at the elevator and "walked us" back to his apartment and what an eye opener that was. There was a big stunning picture on the wall as he opened the door and we walked in. I think they were originally two floors down.

Chapter 7: Weddings and Divorces

Alan and Adi married on Sunday, June 23, 1963 in the Northwest Suburban Congregation temple in Morton Grove, IL. I believe our wedding gift was a car. I'm fuzzy on this, but they drove away in a car to their honeymoon. It was an unusual wedding because four men held up the chuppah (canopy). There was a wedding luncheon in Hinsdale, IL at the Spinning Wheel. Bob Pastern was Alan's best man and Sandra, Adi's sister, was the Maid of Honor.

I had a big snapshot of three white and two blue Tourister cases standing in back of a car with a big sign that says "Just married." Gotta be Alan and Adi leaving on their honeymoon.

****

Ilene married Tom in 1970 – in Deerfield, Illinois. The service was performed by a reformed Rabbi. The dinner was at the Deer Path Inn. The honeymoon was in the Bad Lands. Tom's mother and sister-in-law Sharon gave a picnic for them with a 100 guests. Tom's mom and I hit it off immediately. Very attractive lady – passed away much too young.

A tragedy occurred when Tom's brother committed suicide sometime after the wedding.

Marriages (and Divorces) in Our Family

Alan and Adi married in the Northwest Suburban Congregation in Morton Grove, IL on June 23, 1963 – Divorced.
- Children: David, Betsy

Burt and Marsha married in Minneapolis, MN on Oct. 23, 1965.

Ilene and Tom (Johnson) married in Deerfield, IL on August 9, 1970 (Rabbi: Dan Friedman) – Divorced Jan. 25 1977.
- Child: Miranda

Ilene and Bill (Thornton) married in the Carlton Hotel in Oak Park, IL on May 24, 1986. – Divorced April 23, 1997

Betsy and Jeff (Osser) married at Malmaison in St. Albans, MO on August 18, 1996.
- Children: Evan, Erin

Alan and Janice married in the John Hancock building on June 28, 1997.

Miranda and Dola married in Tanzania on May 28, 2002.

****

Urath, Bill's mother, hosted a wonderful wedding reception for Bill and Ilene in her lovely home in Hyde Park. I met so many well-groomed professional guests, secretaries, Urath's husband's cousins (pictures in last album). Urath was a very successful teacher. She taught cooking and sewing at Du Sable High School in Chicago. Appetizers and drinks in the den and I'm sure (I have no doubts) that a wonderful dinner followed.

I didn't like their beloved dog Bobo (may he be resting in peace), because he was a rambunctious and too loving a dog. He kept jumping up and down on me and I was afraid he'd tear my hose. He was put to sleep this year of old age. Needless to say, it was a sad loss for them.

Bill's best man was Stan Grant. Ilene's Matron of Honor was Adrienne and Miranda was a bridesmaid (at 10 years old). Bill and Ilene were married by a Unitarian minister, Don Wheat. I remember Bill dashing up the white runway smiling from ear to ear. After their honeymoon in Canada and New York, the couple took Miranda to England in November of 1986 and they saw the Changing of the Guard, plays, Stonehenge, Bath, etc.

****

How could I forget some memorable events, such as Urath's entertaining for us.

I once admired several beautiful sets of her dinnerware. She told me that in the early days negroes were not accepted in white restaurants, so all entertaining was done in their homes.

The tablecloths and the napkins were hand crocheted. Bill was the perfect host (I believe his dad had passed away about 5 years before we became a family unit). We had many wonderful Christmas dinners with them. The tremendous trees (all beautifully decorated). Bill always carried them home. He carved those turkeys like he was "born to the knife." Toni was always a great help to her mother – working in the kitchen with her and setting the table, etc. Ilene and I always helped by clearing the table and getting the dishes to Urath.

Toni is Bill's foster sister. She came into the Thornton family in 1947 when she was three years old. Urath brought her home from a child welfare agency. Her father was from the Sioux Indian Tribe.

****

When we (Ilene, Miranda and me) went to St. Louis for Betsy's wedding, Alan paid and booked us into a beautiful hotel, Motel 9. I remember Miranda sitting on the floor doing a great job of wrapping her wedding gift for Betsy and Jeff, a big beautiful blanket.



Betsy and Jeff's wedding (August 1996)

How beautiful the bride and handsome the groom standing under the "chuppah" repeating the wedding vows. En route to Betsy's wedding, she was crying hysterically as it was raining and she felt it was a bad omen, but it turned out to be a gorgeous day.

They were married under a chuppah outside in a beautiful place, repeating the wedding vows after the Rabbi. There were flowers running up

and down the path. She was a beautiful bride in a gorgeous wedding dress carrying a magnificent bouquet.

Then we went back to their home for dinner and I was so impressed to see the deck that Jeff had built.

The reception for Betsy and Jeff's wedding was given by the Senior Ossers at the North Shore Hilton. It was a beautiful affair.

At Besty's wedding reception (I think), I saw Alan and Janice dancing. They were great – when he bent her backward, they reminded me of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, and that's the "emmes" (translated—the truth).

Sad results of the first pregnancy but – oh boy the last two produced my two unbelievably beautiful great-grandchildren.

Betsy and Jeff live in a suburb (Chesterfield) in St. Louis, Missouri.

****

Alan and Janice's wedding on Saturday, June 1997 was at the John Hancock building in the Signature Room. There was a beautiful floral canopy. There was a table set up under the canopy for the service.

Mrs. Ruth Duskin Feldman conducted the service. It was not a religious service—the service was all about loving and caring for each other. Humanistic Judiasm. She has written a book on the service. She is or was the Creative Editor of Mardrika.

The bride wore a black sequined short cocktail dress and was a knockout walking down the aisle holding a magnificent bouquet of flowers. Her handsome groom looked equally good and their smiles were radiant. It was a beautiful sight to see them coming together down the white carpet where Mrs. Feldman was waiting for them under the chuppah.

It was an afternoon wedding and the luncheon was also held in the John Hancock building.

Janice's sister was her Maid of Honor and her niece strewed the carpet with flowers.



Janice and I at their wedding (1997)

****

During the time in 1997 that I was going to the Mi Da beauty salon, I became friendly with one of the customers, Dorothy Feldman. She often drove me home. We would discuss our families and the news of the day and speak on the phone.

On one particular day, I was telling her about Alan and Janice's wedding plans, the name of the place and the kind of service they were going to have. She kind of gasped and said, "Oh my gosh (or words to that effect). You must be the Jacobs that Ruth was telling me about."

Ruth Feldman was her sister-in law. I hadn't connected the names as Feldman is a common Jewish name.

Sometime later she decided to go to a different beauty salon and with all the various things happening to me, we became out of touch.

****

Janice is Vice President of Human Resources for the Chicago Tribune, Masters degree in Business Administration (MBA). She graduated from Northwestern University on December 14, 1996.

****

Miranda and Dola's wedding: We missed that wedding because they were married in Tanzania. We have pictures of the ceremony and his family and him carrying her on the beach.

She wore a stunning African-style wedding gown (her design) with matching hat. Dola wore a typical African wedding suit. I found out that the word "malaika" means Angel in Swahili.

****

Ilene and I gave a party for Miranda and Dola in December 2002 at the Father and Son Italian Restaurant in Skokie. The purpose of the party was to introduce Dola to the family. Dola sat next to me—he seemed to be very comfortable and happy to be with his new family.

Chapter 8: Family and Pets (as of this date 2004)

Both Ilene and Betsy had sweet 16 birthday parties, Ilene's in our home on Estes and Betsy's at a restaurant in Skokie. Betsy also had a beautiful shower given by her best girl friends.

Alan gave Ilene a gold bracelet for her 16th birthday.

****

My Grandchildren

Betsy and I really didn't become the super friends that we really are today until she was married and had children. She was busy growing up. There was a short drive between Chicago and where she stayed but she was busy making her mark with Jenny Craig.

Betsy graduated from Northeastern University in Chicago.

She bartended for a while and had many successful years with Jenny Craig.

My Family

Me:
Deena Florence Shapiro Jacobs – 2/23/1911
Husband:
Joseph George Jacobs – 10/14/14 – 10/27/1993
Children:
Alan Jacobs– 4/25/41
Ilene J. Thornton – 1/17/45
Grandchildren:
Betsy Osser – 7/30/66
David Jacobs – 1/7/72
Miranda Johnson – 9/22/75
Great-Grandchildren:
Evan Osser – 3/4/01
Erin Osser – 9/19/03
Nieces:
Marsha Danet – 4/4/43
Lauren Crawford – 1/14/49
Nephew:
Burt Danet – 7/23/39
Great-Niece:
Benna Crawford – 11/14/82

Jenny Craig wanted Betsy to go to California to teach the Jenny Craig diet to a group there, but she declined – Evan needed her at home. Jenny Craig is still advertising on t.v.

She married in August 1997, the year that Mitzi was adopted.

Jeff is an artist and also a landscape designer. I admire my two granddaughters for selecting such great husbands.

****

I remember when Alan and Adi had a girl from France living with them one summer, I think as an exchange student with Betsy. The only thing that I can remember is that there was some kind of deal, she lived with them to become aware of the American Way of Life. They evidently didn't have soap where she came from, because she smelled very badly when she arrived.

I do also think, Betsy went to Spain (I think), and she did bring me back a very pretty "fan."

****

Once Betsy slept over for some reason and I was fascinated with watching her brush her hair in the morning. She'd sit on my bed, lean over – the hair reached the floor – and she'd brush away.

****

Then there is David – lookin' good and as he said when he called "This is your long forgotten grandson" – however, I didn't forget him. He just forgot me. He did say he didn't forget the many deviled eggs I made just for him.



Miranda, David and Betsy

I was pleased that he had returned from the other planet—safe, sound, and successful in his world of achievements. He was here with Alan on June 30th. Today is August 4th. I hadn't heard from him before, and I haven't heard from him since.

When David lived in Skokie, as a young kid, he went around selling, I believe, hot pads, dish towels and dish clothes from house to house. He was always trying to earn a buck and is now earning quite a few.

David opted not to go to college, but that didn't stop him from becoming a successful business man.

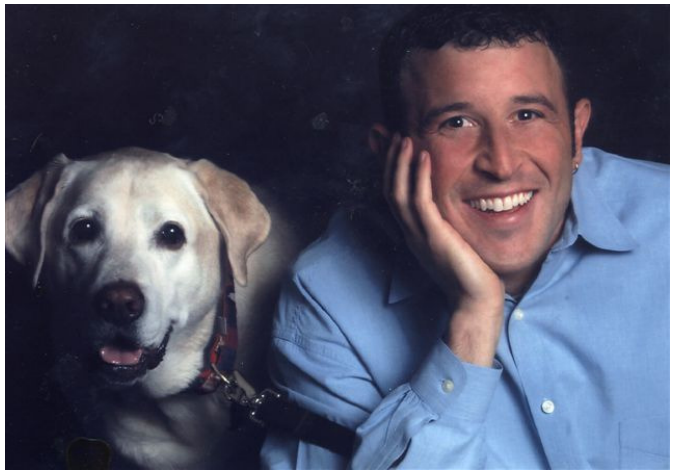
Alan and David are both successful entrepreneurs in their respective fields. Alan and Janice own a beautiful Lake Shore apartment and a country home in Michigan City and David owns his home and other properties, I believe.

****

I remember when David came to see me when I lived in Winston and brought his cute "little" puppy. Alan got down on the floor to play with him. Years later I saw the dog "full growed." He was one big beautiful animal.

****

David's first girlfriend: The first time I heard the expression "My significant other" came from David when he was referring to his girlfriend. I forgot her name, but I do remember her beautiful tattoos (whatta way to disfigure a nice body). I don't remember how long that romance lasted. Alan wasn't happy as she was too old for him. He now has a steady girlfriend, Becky Soloman. When David was here for lunch, I told him I would like to meet her—I'm waiting. She works for him now – and they have a nice relationship – good friends.



David and Saber

David's extensive travels – business-wise and vacation time. When we get together if time permits, maybe we can discuss where's he's been.

****

Miranda, my third child, courtesy of her mom and dad, who gave me the happiness of watching a very little red head grow up into the modern day whiz kid and is growing up to be "my granddaughter, the lawyer," and in two years it will be a fact. I only hope that I will still be around (Miranda says I will be – a la vie). She has given me the pride and joy of watching her climb the educational pole to the top.

Miranda is strong in her commitment to Social Justice for All. Over the years Miranda has received honors and awards for her academic achievement and commitment to social justice. In 2002, Miranda was awarded the Martin Luther King Jr. Social Justice Award from her alma mater, Dartmouth, where she graduated with top honors. Our Wonder Kid is going to help make this world a better place.

Miranda went to Tanzania on a Fulbright Scholarship, where she lived for three years helping women and children there. She also met her husband, Dola, in the year 2000 when she lived in Dar es Salaam. He was working for a cellular phone company named Vodacom and she was working for a local organization, the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP). They met at a party hosted by mutual friends, who were other young people from the U.S.

Dola went to college for two years in London, where he graduated from West London College with an Advanced Diploma in Computer Science. He was accepted into a Masters program in the UK but returned to Tanzania to be with his mother and brothers, as his father had passed away several years previously. He is currently attending New York University in a business program, and I just found out he made the Dean's List.



Miranda and Dola in Tanzania (2001)
"So much love – radiantly happy"

Miranda is now in a joint program at New York University School of Law and the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University. She will get Juris Doctor and Masters in Public Affairs degrees in May of 2006. She just was notified that she is a Butler Scholar, which means that she is in the top ten students in her law school class. Boy have I got a smart granddaughter! – I take full credit for that. Tra-la!

Being a child of divorce could have been a very sad experience for her, but having parents whose only thoughts were not to make it so—so, her time here is divided pleasantly between her mother and father.

When Miranda was a little gal (grade school age) she never would be without a book. If we took her shopping, she'd plop down on the floor and read while Ilene and I hunted for clothes for her. Her name was upon the wall board as one of the students who had read the most books.

Over the years, I would pick Miranda up at school, and many days I would drive her back with me to Chicago. Sometimes she would stay over night with us and I would drive her back home. In Oak Park, we would go out for ice cream cones. One day when I came to pick Miranda up, when I went to park, I lost control of the car and the car jumped up on the lawn. When Miranda came out, she was very surprised to find me and the car there. I had done a lot of damage to that corner property but nothing was ever done about that.

One time when I was supposed to pick Miranda up, I was late. She was waiting for me at the school door and she told her girlfriend that I was always late.

One of Miranda's gifts to me was a small hand calculator. She figured it would help me balance my check books (arithmetic and math – my nemesis in high school). Miranda, I'm not listing all of your many wonderful gifts to me.

****

I was plenty excited when I went to Miranda's Dartmouth graduation in 1997. Alan and Janice joined us at Dartmouth. Can't remember where we went to eat.

We heard the announcement of Miranda's name. Alan, Janice and I stood on chairs (folding) to watch Miranda receive her diploma. What a thrill that was.

When Miranda came back to Chicago for Tanzania on a visit in January 2002, Ilene and Alan threw a party for her at an Italian restaurant in Chicago. I came, along with Tom and Nathan, and two of Miranda's friends, Alfonso and Goose.

****

Miranda computerized this entire memoir so far. If it is not finished, she said that she is going to take it home. It's 11:30 p.m. on August 3rd (Tuesday?), I'm sitting here thinking of all the time and effort she has put into this journal. Miranda did this big job like she was being paid big bucks for all her time and effort.

****

People magazine also had an article about Barbara and Jenna Bush working in Africa helping children with AIDS. Very commendable but compared to what Miranda accomplished in Africa, I can't be too impressed with the Bush gals, and with their money they didn't have to endure hot weather and many other inconveniences.

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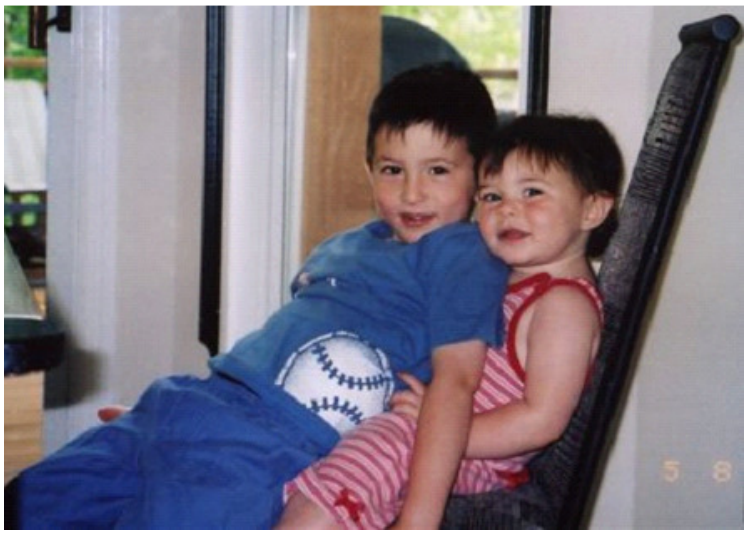
My great-grandchildren

Betsy sent a cute announcement of Evan's arrival which read "Our home just been enlarged by two feet." He was 7 pounds, 6 ounces and 20 inches long. Erin was born about two years later.

****

Alan's a great father and grandfather. Dave and Betsy are close friends. Evan has a cute name for Alan: Papa.

****



Evan and Erin – "they are so adorable"

Betsy's constant flow of snapshots and e-mails (when I had the equipment) has kept me up to date with my great-grandchildren's progress, as you can see by my gallery. Betsy has been more than generous with pictures of my great-grandchildren. Even beginning with her pregnancy. The pictures show her tummy in various stages – even at the very moment she gave birth to Evan. Jeff did a great photography job. It was practically a monthly report how she was progressing. Funny back and side views. I have watched them grow and grow (my

gallery is "show time" or the like). Cute—funny—and so dear.

They are mighty adorable kids. Two came yesterday, July 12th, 2004 (4x5 professional pics). Evan is 3 – Erin is 9 months. There's 18 pictures in my wall(frame) gallery and many more in my album. Even big postcard-size snaps at the "naming time." Bris too. The rabbi holding the baby Evan. There are snaps of Betsy and Jeff with the children.

As I look at my gallery of pictures, I "qvell" seeing via pictures how my great-grandchildren are growing up (kenahorra). Thanks to Betsy for all the contributions of pictures. I told Betsy that she and Jeff should go into the children's photography business. I love her a bunch.

I am looking at the last two pictures she sent. I can feel my mouth smiling when I ask Betsy how come Erin is in such an adorable position and she says "just lucky I guess." And Evan, that handsome little dude.

(If I were jogging, I would be out of breadth because this is a do-over script, because I had pity on my transcriber because it would have been an ordeal for her to read the script. I scribble as well as I can write, which I do sometime on notes to myself and then I'm annoyed because I can't read them. This do over doesn't exactly excel either.)

Funny- "Mr. Webster" never heard of the word "adorable." I've worn this one out in talking about my great-grandchildren. It's called a "vest pocket dictionary" and there's no date on it.

I know that e-mail and writing can be time-consuming, but I appreciate the efforts that both my granddaughters make for me.

****

Alan said a good memoir isn't interesting unless it includes some sexy scandals. I'll have to look around and try to find some.



Lonnie, Lauren, Barney and June (1958)

I was a matchmaker at one time. I fixed Barney Gross up with my sister-in-law June. Barney was the nephew of one of my friends. He had just been discharged from the navy and being a stranger in Minneapolis, he hadn't made any friends (I believe he had a sister and parents there but I'm not sure). I told him I had a very nice, good-looking sister in law. He was interested and said he would like to meet her, so I gave her June's number. He called her and they clicked. They dated for a short time and the wedding took place at a downtown hotel.

They have two children, Lauren and Lonnie, who are close in age.

We were very very close friends in our relationship. In fact they once asked us if we would adopt their children if anything happened to them. We thought it a strange request for a young couple, but we said we would. Thank goodness nothing like that ever happened.

Barney and June have an apartment at 550 Sheridan Square in Evanston (funny that I remember after all these years).

We are no longer on friendly terms because money lifted its ugly head. Both Barney and I were responsible for the breach in our relationship. Joe was very angry at me for being part of the cause of the break and because he told me not to say what I did.

Barney and June met Alan and Adi at the movies one time but didn't acknowledge them. The last time we were all together was at our home for Alan's 13th birthday party where we had a good time.

I've never been to Barney and June's apartment, but when Joe's Mom visited us in Chicago, she always stayed with us. I don't know if that was because June worked or didn't have room or whatever. Grandma would go into Joe's bathroom, close the door, and call June. It was very secretive.

I haven't seen Barney since, but I did see June at Goldie's at the time of Abe's death (Alan was there too). June called when she heard that Joe was very sick and wanted to talk to or see him. I said no, but I think if they had come, Joe would have felt that he was dying.

This is all water under the dam now and I wish it never happened. Right or wrong, it was a bad situation. Now the Grosses won't know Betsey and Jeff and my great-grandchildren or Miranda and Dola, nor they them.

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Lauren and Benna

Despite the distance between us and Barney and June, their daughter, Lauren Crawford, and I are very good friends. I love her. She was born in Minneapolis and lives on 1055 W. Pratt in Chicago. She went to Roosevelt High School. She has been divorced for 20 years. Benna, her daughter, is still in touch with her dad – Robert. He lives in Washington (he and Lauren were married for 12 years).

Lauren went to the University of Chicago and taught at a University of Illinois-owned print shop. She later worked for her dad for 10 years, then she bought the business and has had it for 20 years. It's an advertising agency called Jay Barr, which is located at Broadway and Devon.

She drives a beautiful black car (a 1985 Volvo). It looks like a small limo. One year she picked me up and we went to a party for Miranda.

Lauren has been hospitalized for cancer. She would drop in before going home from work or during lunchtime. During the time I was living in Winston and was sick, she would come in every morning before going to work. When I wasn't up, she wouldn't wake me but would leave the plants or flowers on the bed with a note.

We're still very much in touch. Tragically, she has lost the sight in one eye. She's in remission now and has her good days, but not too long ago had to return to the hospital for treatment. It was very painful, but she's back to work and coping as best she can. She is able to work and to drive.

Benna is now 22. She was named after Joe's dad, Ben. She went to Lincoln Park High School and is now a junior in college. She is studying to be a lawyer and is an excellent student. Benna attended the University of Illinois at Champaign. She returned home to Chicago when Lauren became sick again. She worked at DePaul and took classes there. She now goes to school full-time at the University of Illinois at Chicago and has 5 classes. She is a beautiful violin player. She once played with the Midwest orchestra when she was very young. She has many interests that are similar to Miranda's.

Lauren and Benna have done a lot of backpacking and twelve years ago they backpacked to California and wound up visiting Marsha and Burt in their former apartment.

****

Goldie and Abe Wilenski, Joe's sister and brother in law, lived in Minneapolis. The Wilenskis rented an apartment at 3913 Portland Street near her dad's store and later moved to their own two-story home in St. Louis Park. Their first car was a Peugeot, and they later drove a Volvo from Minneapolis to New York.



Marsha, Abe and Goldie

Goldie and Abe's bedroom was on the first floor and Marsha's room was on the second floor. When we came to visit, we slept upstairs, and we'd come down for a great breakfast like pancakes or french toast. The food was always nicely served and good. Goldie was an excellent hostess and cook.

My brother-in-law, Abe, was a fur auctioneer before he retired. He would auction off mink pelts that would eventually wind up in mink coats. He was a quiet, very nice, amicable guy who wouldn't be unkind to anything, yelling his head off selling those pelts. He must have been very good at his job, because they owned their own home, the car and they put Marsha through college and nothing was charged for the Wilenskis—everything was cash.



Burt and Marsha (Oct. 23, 1965)
"What a beautiful wedding"

Goldie and I were very close at one time and then we had a disagreement and we split and I called her to make amends and not too long after that, she and Abe came to visit when we were at Winston.

Goldie learned to drive after Abe passed away. We gave her a lot of credit for doing so at this late stage of her life, because it was not too long after she had had a stroke from which she had made a complete recovery.

Marsha and Burt met at the University of Minnesota, when they where both ushering at a Minneapolis Concert. Their first date was on January 23, 1964 and they were married on October 23, 1965. We shared the dates of Joe's birthday and their anniversary.

Burt graduated from Yale in 1960 and the University of Minnesota in 1967. He has a PhD. –his past training was in psychoanalysis. His mother was born in Springfield, Massachusetts and his father in Lithuania.

Marsha attended the Adath Jeshurun Temple in Miinneapolis. She attended the University of Minnesota. She didn't graduate – she got married instead.

Now Marsha and Burt Danet live in Manhattan Beach, California. He is a great guy and they are both wonderful to talk to. Ilene and I have a wonderful communication line with her and Burt. He is a retired clinical psychologist. She has never worked. They are enjoying life after many many years of ill health and car accidents through no fault of their own. When their building was hit by an earthquake, no real damage to them or their apartment. Marsha said they hit the floor immediately face down until it was over, a few small articles flew around.

When feeling okay, they take interesting trips, and it's delightful hearing about them. It's about time bad things stop happening to them.

Marsha is a perfectionist, a great cook and all around a nice gal. Marsha is so very fastidious, even the fringes on the little rugs in her bedroom have to be absolutely even. She would empty Joe's cigarette ashes before he finished the cigarette – no mess for her. We have a love-fest going, Ilene, Marsha and me.

****

Family Pets

Current:
Mitzi (me), Ogopa (Miranda and Dola), Katy & Kitty Marie (Betsy and Jeff), Squeaky (Janice and Alan), Saber (David)

Former:
Dusty, Sheba & Taper (Ilene and Alan's dogs when they were children), 2 parakeets (from Shirley Goldberg), Big cat in Minneapolis (to catch THE MICE from an empty lot next-door, where there was lots of excavating for a new building)

I think Alan and Adi had a big dog (a German Shepard?) at one time, but he tore off the living room couch when he was left alone, so they had to give him away.

****

It took Ilene a whole year to get me to adopt a cat, which I did in 1997 when I adopted Mitzi at an animal clinic. I have all the adoption papers. It was very expensive. The cost of adopting Mitzi included her shots, examination by the vet, and being spayed (poor cat – no more kittens). Since then, Ilene insists on giving her annual exams (even though Betsy and Janice don't find it necessary for their pets). Now she may not do this anymore. It took Ilene one year to convince me to finally accept the idea of having a pet, and Mitzi is one of the best investments that I have ever made.

Mitzi did have an ear infection recently, and I had to inject drops into her ears. She is such a good patient, so it caused me no problems.

She is one big cat and I love her to pieces. I especially like when I talk to her and her mouth goes like she's answering me. The only bad thing is that she's like a bird and she molts when the weather starts to get warmer in the spring. If I'm wearing black, her fur comes off on my slacks and it's a nuisance to get off. I have a lint brush that help with this.

The hardest physical thing I have to do is clean Mitzi's litter box – the bending part is difficult. Mitzi doesn't earn her keep (not so!).

I feed her like she's on people time (a.m. – noon – nite). I should have started like Janice does – one big bowl a day.

Whenever I open the refrigerator door, Mitzi thinks I am getting something to eat and she stands by her bowl waiting for me to feed her.

When she nudges me for a meal, she doesn't "Meow" – it's more like a squeal – or maybe that's the way it sounds to my ear.

If I don't trip over or run over Mitzi one of these days it will be a miracle.

When Mitzi is sleeping on my side of the bed, she is the immovable object and objects strenuously when I shove her over.

Dolores, a cleaning gal here, doesn't like cats. She says Mitzi hisses at her when she comes in to clean. However, she usually runs under the bed because she is afraid of the noise of the vacuum. I just hope I never have any complaints. The boss of the department said to "Tell Mitzi to go in the bathroom when the cleaning gal is here." The problem is that I don't think Mizi would understand if I said "Mitzi, go into the bathroom" and I can't life or push her. She gets highly insulted when I do try to push her with my foot. Most of the help like her and will talk to her and pet her but I can understand the feelings of those who don't like cats or who are allergic.

****

12:30, Sunday June 21st, 2004: I'm watching Mitzi sitting on the couch grooming for the day. First she washes her paws – then her face – and as far back as she can reach.

I comb the rest of her. She is my beautiful calico furry "friend."

She doesn't have "cat fur" – it's called cat "hair."

Aches and pains – my back and my toes – enuf writing now – lunch time. Now it's my back. I think it's because I'm bending so much.

Chapter 9: Life at Winston

In 1970, we moved to Winston Towers at 7033 N. Kedzie in Chicago. It was a new building – the whole area was new. The area was almost barren at first –no grass or trees and just a couple streets away a great huge tank of some kind, which was later removed. Before the building was finished, people were already signing up for occupancy.

There were three apartments left for sale when we decided to move in. We had our choice of the 1st, 3rd or 15th floors, and decided on the 15th, 1506 to be exact. Leo was already in on the 6th floor. Joe figured if the building was good enough for Leo (who bought as his sister was living on the 4th floor and loved it).



Joe and I at Winston
"I wish I knew what we were laughing about –
we were sitting on the old orange couch at Winston."

At Winston, we had a two-bedroom apartment, a large dining room and living room, nice-sized kitchen, and two bathrooms. We each had our own bathroom: mine was across from the den and Joe's was in the bedroom. The bedroom had twin beds, night-tables with lamps on either side, and a huge picture of a young girl with red hair lying on her stomach naked looking in the mirror. Her long red hair reminded me of Miranda.

As you entered the apartment, there was a needlepoint chair that was given to me by my mother and a black bar with a big mirror above it. A dark wood divider separated the entryway from the living room. My mother's beautiful Baldwin spinet piano was in the living room. Alan got a wonderful price for the piano as it was in excellent condition and probably only needed tuning. Unfortunately, I didn't inherit my mother's musical ability. David wanted to exchange the old piano that they had that he was taking lessons on for my piano.

I decorated the living room in an Oriental motif. On a pedestal, there was a white statue of a Oriental man carrying two baskets, one on each shoulder. I also had various fans and artifacts that Alan brought back from his many business trips. There was a stunning big oval glass coffee table that sat in front of the orange couch. There was a matching orange love seat that was adjacent.

There was also a fake bonsai tree that we used as a Chanukah bush, when I put the children's presents under the bush, with their names on each one and Miranda would deliver them.

Our den, incidentally, was meant for a second bedroom but it became Joe's super office. Inside, there was Joe's wonderful desk with big drawers along with shelves full of books with bookends and Joe's many bowling trophies were on the top shelf. There was a filing cabinet in the closet. There was also a couch that opened up. It got a lot of use over the years as Joe often slept there when the snoring got too much for me. He emphatically denied the accusation - so one evening – in bed – Alan brought in a recorder and played it for Joe to hear the snoring. Alan got no rebuttal from Joe. It was a funny time. He had taped the snoring.

****

I couldn't wait until Joe bought me a stationary bike. It was going to do magical things for my hips and body – I became too lazy and used the bike rarely and Joe was so disgusted because I had harassed him for so long to get it.

Joe always bought good cars and – at one time – we owned a Cadillac. He suggested to Alan that he purchase a good car too, as it indicated to buyers how successful he was selling American Tourister luggage. How good the product was and how easy it was to sell – the big competitor was Samsonite Luggage.

Joe's manager at American Tourister told him not to socialize with his competitor from Samsonite luggage (they had been friendly before this). (I wonder if Alan would verify this).

Joe's competitor introduced his nephew Richard to Ilene. They became engaged, but she broke the engagement because Ilene felt he was immature and too materialistic. He told us that he was going to buy Ilene a Cadillac like the one he drove.

****

We became friends with the Ben Blocks, Leo and Angie Greenberg, Dorothy and Earl Reisberg and a few others. Dorothy's sister and her husband lived in the building. The girls played Kaluki and Mah Jongg and the guys played Gin. Wednesday nights were game nights for all of us.



Angie and Leo Greenberg, Ed and Shirley Goldberg

All those years that I played the good old Chinese game of Mah Jongg: little ivory tiles (looked like large sugar cubes) and racks to place them on. Joe bought me a beautiful set –that came with a good looking carrying case—in case any of the players didn't have one. Two or five gals could play – a little lunch – or just some candy—chips—soft drinks. Games started at 12:30 or 1:00 –ended at 4 or 4:30 in time to get home for dinner. I played with a couple of different groups. I loved that game.

I gave Joe a beautiful poker chip holder. The stakes were always medium, never high.

In the evenings, it was fun when the guys would play poker or gin and we gals Mah Jongg or a certain card game—called Kaluki. When I left Wiston, I gave the set to Marcela's sister. I just knew I wouldn't be using it anymore—the residents here have never heard of either game.

One of my good friends at Winston, Dorothy Greenfield, was a pretty wealthy widow when I met her. We played Mah Jongg and met for the games at each other's home. We became more than just card friends. She'd pick me up in her Cadillac and we'd usually drive out to the Carson's mall-lunched—window shopped—and occasionally made a purchase. She lived on Sheridan Road, not too far from Alan's before he moved to Lake Shore Drive. She had no family left except a nephew who was close in friendship and took care of her business affairs. We kept in touch but the lines have been severed considerably. My many moves and hers too. She is in a building like mine—assisted living.

Another wonderful friend was Carolyn Farkas. Carolyn and Al lived on Marine Drive in Chicago for many years and later they moved to San Antonio, Texas to be with their daughter. We visited them once a zillion years ago. It's a beautiful city. When Joe and I were visiting Carolyn and Al, they took us to see the Alamo and I don't remember what I saw and why it is famous. Her brother-in-law was the doctor for the San Antonio Spurs basketball team. Our second night in San Antonio we were taken to a game. I know nothing about basketball, but it certainly was exciting to watch.

She has been a friend of mine for many years. When she married, she worked for a very well-known doctor on Michigan Avenue. Al was a butcher.

They were one of the couples who we played cards with.

Al passed away, I think before Joe died. Carolyn still lives in San Antonio and has a lovely apartment that is adjacent to her daughter's.

They are a very closely knit family and has two granddaughters, Nancy and Wendy. Nancy doesn't have children, and I don't think she is about to. Wendy has two, so Carolyn is also a great-grandmother.

She too has had severe back problems. When she and Al were younger, they were big jitterbug dancers—and that takes some fancy footwork and they were good (we weren't—not the jitterbug). They loved it and went dancing often. I wonder if all that dancing in high heels could be part of her back problems.

We've had a good friendship through the years. We didn't shop together because she had a full-time job.

We've been in touch over the years, by phone and mail, but that has lightened up. Carolyn sent me many e-mails when I had the equipment (a gift from Alan) and I would dictate to Marcela. We also talk on the phone and write letters. She does calligraphy and has beautiful handwriting. She was in business for herself and did invitations and announcements.

I remember her letting me know when their youngest niece was getting married, she insisted on the wedding being held in ROME. The family was upset because it was going to be an expensive deal—the whole bridal party, just family. However, they went, and wound up thoroughly enjoying the <u>whole</u> affair and they loved Rome.

Speaking of Carolyn, I must phone her.

****

Marilyn and Aaron Green field were our friends on the tenth floor. Joe and I always felt so sorry for him because his wife was a "Big Time" lush – but all I can say is that I wished that I could cook sober like she cooked smashed.

Her meals were always different – this one time it was extra large shrimp that we had to peel – it was fun. I can't remember what went with it, but the shrimp kept coming. But another time we were having our dinner and she comes dashing in from the kitchen, hands on her hips yelling "Who the hell left the toilet seat up?" Poor Aaron was so embarrassed. All was quiet!!

St. Patrick's Day Dinner: corned beef and cabbage – the likes of which I have never eaten before or after. Delicious!

Desserts were usually plain – we sure didn't need big or fancy ones.

For one dinner she was about to cook a live lobster but before she could get it into the boiling water, it slipped out of her hand and fell near her feet and started to go after her toes. It was funny in the telling – not so at the time. She yelled to Aaron for help. We weren't invited to that dinner – she just told me about it.

She started to drink before we got there, but her dinners were always wonderful. There was always a glass of liquor near her plate. The guys would have one drink – no cards, because she would have objected.

She had an expression she would use on occasions: "Ain't that a kick in the head."

She and Aaron were both college graduates and when she was sober she was fun to be with. Cancer caused her death.



Me in my bowling shirt (May 1960). Standing in front of my mother's spinet piano.

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There's two snapshots showing the front and back of my bowling shirt. This was during the time when Joe and I bowled at the Classic Bowling Alley. Joe was on the men's team at Classic Bowl and won many many trophies. I was on the women's team and I didn't win any trophies, but I loved the game and it was fun on the certain night when the men and the women played together. Joe used to tell me that I was a lousy bowler but I had good form when I delivered the ball.

When I bowled at Kingsley Place, I would hold onto a bar with my left hand. I miss that here.

At Kingsley, the bowling ball was as light as a feather. I could lift it up with two fingers—the regular ball for me was 10 or 12 pounds. I forgot how much Joe's was –I couldn't life it.

Joe told me he used to do a lot of dancing at the Merigold Dance Hall in Minneapolis. He was a good looking guy and an excellent dancer—I wasn't bad, and the more I danced with him, the better I became—he was a good leader.

****

Joe had taught me how to fill the gas tank in the car and I recall one time I forgot to put the cap back on. I had laid the cap on the hood, paid the bill and drove away. The cap fell off, but a guy driving by saw what happened. He honked and pointed to the back of the car. No harm done –spilled a little gas and had to get a new cap.

I always like to sit in the car when I drove into a car wash. I carried a roll of paper tolls in the event the window was left streaked in spats.

****

From my early days, I remember the Radisson Hotel in State Street in Chicago (probably the same chain as in Minneapolis). I would meet Joe there after shopping and we'd go home together.

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The Day I Forgot My Car

I very rarely shopped on Michigan Avenue. If I did decide to sightsee the windows, I would leave my car in a parking space and go down by train. I had to transfer. On this particular day, I stopped in at Sak's 5th Avenue and looked at all the beautiful expensive things – looked only – got tired and went home. When Joe came in – kissed me and said "where's your car?" Boy did I feel stupid about THAT because I had left it in Sak's parking lot. He good-naturedly just laughed and drove me down to get it. But it was too late—the store was closed, and we had to go down the next day.

****

In Winston, I had a nice parking space in the garage and Joe showed me how to back up and park between cars. Guess, I had a problem at first, which reminds me I tried to teach Ilene how to drive. I gave up and hired an instructor. Now I don't remember when she drove my car. I don't think she did but needed the experience for something at Bradley. I was a good driver, no accidents. I received some kind of "good driver" diploma BUT (see car crash below).

****

Passover Dinners

First in the living room, chopped liver and the wine and nut mixture on matzos. For dinner, chicken soup with matzo balls, roast chicken, matzo kugel, and the big round Passover cake with the hole in the center with strawberries.

We had these little green Seder books. Alan would be the leader and each of us would take turns reading from these prayer books.

I don't remember Passover services when I lived at home, though my mom did all the Passover cooking and the hard work of putting all the everyday dishes away or just covering them up.

In a very religious home, when a death occurred picture and mirrors were always covered with towels or sheets and the mourners sat on long benches. The service required was called a Minyan and it always included 10 men only and a rabbi conducted the services. Yamakas or hats were always worn. A big meal followed – usually brought in by other family members and friends. The mourning period was usually for three days and visitors continued to come.

****

One Thanksgiving

One Thanksgiving, the Thorntons were our guests. The turkey was good and so was the stuffing and Alan did his usual excellent carving job. Urath brought the gravy. She would start it at home and thicken it when she got to our house.

I had appetizers in the living room and Joe would serve the drinks. Grace did the cleanup and Joe drove her to the bus.

I was always worried that things wouldn't turn out good. I do think once the turkey had to be baked a while longer – appetizers come in handy then.

****

Joe's 60th Birthday

Alan knew the manager at the Playboy Club in Lake Geneva, Geneva, Illinois, and he booked us in Hugh Hefner's suite. When we got there, there was a bottle of champagne, fruits and nuts on the table.

Joe was buzzing around, looking in corners – and behind chairs – when I asked him what he was doing – he very calmly said, "I'm looking for the bunnies." I don't remember the cost or anything more about it.

Chapter 10: Joe's Retirement

Joe worked for American Tourister Luggage Company and later Alan joined the club and their business card read the "Tourister Duet." (I think, I'm hazy on some areas). But Joe had to retire after 35 years (as one of the top salesman) as he had reached 65 years, which was the age limit. He also was an excellent bowler (loved it). He received many trophies. He was getting dressed to go bowling at the Classic Bowling Alley one Friday. As he started to leave for the game, he had a massive stroke in June of 1993. I heard him fall to the floor in the den. Unfortunately, he lived in misery for quite a few weeks until October 27, 1993. It was such an agonizing time for him, because mentally he was okay but physically he was incapacitated.

His ashes were strewn over the cemetery, where he was cremated (his request).

At the time he passed away, Alan and he were not on real good terms. He and Alan were so angry with each other – It was a heartbreaking time for me. I believe the anger was brought about because Alan felt he was not given enough of the good territory – but whatever territory Alan had, he made it very successful (I think it was straight commission). American Tourister was a long long time ago. Joe was very proud of Alan's success.

I have felt so bad over the years that he wasn't lucky like me to have lived long enough to "kvell" in Alan's climb up that BIG ladder and to see his great-grandchildren – Just think, we would be watching the children in person, not pictures.

Chapter 11: Life at Winston, Part II

CAR CRASH (1994)

I was parked in a parking spot at the LaSalle Bank. I finished whatever I came for. It was a cold rainy miserable slippery day. I lost control when I stepped on the gas (instead of the brake). My foot froze on the gas, and I kept going around and around until I finally hit an embankment, and my car practically split in half. I slid under the steering wheel immobile. Somebody saw the accident and notified someone in the bank and in seconds, the police department, the fire department, and an ambulance were there. A nurse opened my door and said "Don't move, lady. You probably have a whiplash." I said to her, "I don't have a whiplash. Just please get me out of my car."

The car was completely totaled, but I escaped without a scratch. Somebody up there was really looking after me. I was so fortunate that there was no one else around when this accident occurred.

Alan, not too far back, had told me I ought to quit driving because I was 83 years old at the time. Of course, I wouldn't listen. After the accident, I didn't have a choice. That was the end of my driving time.

Alan had been notified. I had his cell phone number with me. He came immediately and took over. His cell phone came in handy. He called for a tow truck, and then he drove me home. It was amazing that I was able to walk away. But there went my independence.

****

EAR HEMORRHAGE

I was playing cards at my friend's apartment (I don't remember what year). We finished our game, and I was just about to leave and like a cloud burst my ear started hemorrhaging. My friend handed me a big towel. I called David on his cellphone and he called Alan. David drove me in his Jeep to the Evanston hospital. He gave me a big push UP. We met Alan at the hospital and went to the emergency room, but I wasn't taken until 4 a.m. Both guys stayed with me until I was settled in bed.

****

Ilene and I would go to the Lincolnwood Theatre. My hearing was bad at this time, so she would whisper the words to me. I would buy the tickets, however, because they were cheaper for seniors. I just asked for two senior tickets – the ticket taker never questioned it.

Then it was no fun anymore. I guess that's when Alan brought me the VCR. Ilene started bringing movies at that time and hasn't stopped.

****

I will never forget my friend Lil Golden, who still lives in Winston in a one bedroom apartment. She had 4 sons and never referred to them by name—it was my son #1, my #2 son, etc. We were good friends. We both went to the same beauty salon (My Day) – different operators. If she finished ahead, she'd wait for me. She too had a fall, while visiting in Minneapolis.

****



My wonderful Gal Friday Marcela, who helped take care of me at Winston. Small in stature, but big – real big in whatever she did – E-mail – a breeze.

Ethel Baswell was another wonderful aide. She and Cecelia also did my e-mail when Marcela was gone on weekends. Cecelia came Saturdays at 6 to Sunday at 6 to relieve Marcela.

Chapter 12: My Ninetieth Birthday (February 23, 2001)

Like Lincoln's famous Gettysburg address, my 90th birthday will long be remembered by me, starting with the transportation, via a white stretch limo (the transport and the party were both courtesy of my son). I remember telling Marcela that I hope someone's looking out their window and sees us getting in this beautifully chauffeured car. Marcela and I loved the looks of the interior: minibar, carpeting, décor, etc. Both Marcela and I were very impressed. The chauffeur wore a "cap" and he was so very helpful and courteous in helping me in and out of the car. It's hard to believe that this was over three years ago.


Me with Alan and Janice at my 90th birthday celebration.

The dinner was at the Spiaggia Italian Restaurant on North Michigan Ave. Alan was waiting for us when the limo drove up. I said to Ben Block later that a mench could easily become addicted to this kind of luxury.

My birthday started early, because two days before the big day, I received a beautiful bouquet of flowers from Alan and Janice. On the day of my birthday, I

received a gorgeous bouquet of flowers from the Danets and Ilene.

I've even got a good picture of David kissing me at the party. He was wearing a smart looking yellow jacket and came with Geri.

I don't believe I could tell you what I ate or if I ate. Ilene was responsible for the beautiful floral centerpiece on the table and she gave it to Janice later, as Mitzi would have had her own private celebration and then gotten sick. Nothing at that time was too high for her to reach.

For dessert, no big birthday cake but little tiny individual squares of chocolate cake with frosting, sliced for serving with tiny little mini candles. The waitress carried it in all lit up on a round silver tray and placed it in front of me. She told me to make a wish and blow them out, which I did (everyone clapped), and the waitress served dessert.



Mitzi and I enjoying my 90th birthday flowers

It was quite an evening. I also received so many cards, plants, flowers and gifts.

Weatherwise, it was a miserable, cold rainy night, but I didn't notice because I was just so happy. Alan still knows how to throw a party.

The whole affair was just so perfect. The guests, besides the family were the Reisbergs, Dorothy and Earl, Marcela, Cecilia, Ben Block and Mort and Leora, Gloria and Jordan. The family there were Alan and Janice, David and Geri, and Ilene.

Jordan had a birthday luncheon for his Dad (who was also 90) in March – Ben was my guest here at the Arms for lunch several months ago. He looked good, and it was so very nice to see him again. (It's June 20th, 2004, Father's Day, 3:45 a.m. Mitzi is wandering around, having a little pre-breakfast and wondering why we have to be out here at this ungodly hour of the morning and why am I eating chocolate covered peanuts for my breakfast that Ilene brought yesterday….I just finished leaving Alan and Jeff a Fathers Day Greeting. Just remembered a cute funny incident in Alan and Janice's apartment. Janice was bending over to pick up something and Squeaky jumped on her back. If I had a camera, it would have been a cute shot. This is one beautiful day today.)

Now, three years later, with many bad bumps in between, I still feel mighty blessed. I still have all my marbles up where they should be.

Yumping Yimmoni, I shure have yumped around a lot and I still have a few yumps to go.

Chapter 13: Winston to Kingsley

I moved from Winston Tower to Kingsley Place in 2001. We sold my condo because I could no longer afford Marcela and Cecelia, plus the costs of living in Winston.

Several years after Joe passed away, Alan took over all the necessary details to move me to an independent living facility, and there were many. To sell my condo, he suggested that I do a do over with the apartment (Winston) with new carpeting and all new top of the line kitchen appliances and he got a terrific price for the condo for me.

Ilene and Alan, after a lot of investigating for an assisted living place found Kingsley Place. They helped me get settled there.

I was only there for a short time, when Kinsley Place was sold and I moved to the Oak Park Arms. Alan helped me move to the Arms. He picked me up and drove me here. Ilene then picked up and became my lifeline (She used to come to Chicago to see me several times a month to visit,



Me with Adi, David, Ilene, Betsy, Evan and Miranda
Kingsley Place (summer 2002)

and I found out what an hour's drive it was from Oak Park to Chicago when Alan drove me here to live.)

I must have done something right, because without the wonderful help of my two "kids," where would I be. Good question, and since I've been here, I am so close to Ilene. Bill has been wonderfully nice to me – getting Mitzi to the doctors, getting her food and litter. And Ilene, of course, has schlepped me to the doctors, stayed with me on Halloween night when I had terrible stomach pains. She and Bill have taken me shopping, which means putting my wheelchair in the trunk, and he pushes me around Carson's to wherever department we think I might find some wearing apparel. I also remember the wonderful dinner parties, Urath, his mother, gave. Whatta cook and hostess – shove over Martha.

Janice (just in one time) showed Mitzi how to use her litter box in 1997.

Also, Ilene and I have been guests at Janice and Alan's beautiful Lake Shore Drive apartment and whatta View! And I still have the Thanksgiving place card – great dinner. There was something that I had never eaten before or after that was absolutely delicious, and I don't recall the name.

****

Oy, I'm drowning in my own papers.

****

Kingsley Place – when you enter the front door, you enter the foyer and you are totally taken by surprise when you hear the chirping of birds –8 or 10 of them housed in glass compartments. They are beautiful happy little "critters" – one in particular would catch your eye—totally black except for a streak of orange down one wing. They never paid any attention to rude knocking on the glass. They were flown in from Africa and were very much a conversation piece. The mating season is always on—you could always recognize the males as they were always in pursuit of the females.

There, Alan, is the sexy part of my memoirs and not bad enough to be prosecuted for obscene "journalism."

****

Before I had a colonoscopy, I had to consume gallons of a certain kind of medicated liquid. Marcela came to stay with me and served me this liquid all through the night (horrible tasting). I have trouble getting down a class of water, so the above was kind of traumatic for me. I was living at Kingsley Place at this time. Marcela had to sleep on the couch, and as short as she is, she still had to curl up a little (Someday, as Ilene said before, I'm going to be dehydrated and blow away.)

****

One summer day in 2003, Cecelia, her husband and two young sons took me to the Botanical Gardens. They took turns pushing me around in my wheelchair. We had lunch and some of the many things I saw were a beautiful big white bear and monkeys jumping around in a tree. The whole day was simply wonderful.

****

Kingsley Place had their own driver, Leon, for three days a week. These would be days we could make our appointments—doctors, dentists, etc. He was so marvelous in helping us up and down the bus stairs and would not accept tips. He took us on various sightseeing trips – Navy Pier, Frank Lloyd Wright homes, etc. He was very knowledgeable about all these areas, as he used to be a cab driver. He would also stop at ice cream shops for us.

I had a nasty accident one day. The Kingsley Place driver accidentally shut the car door while my hand was in the way. Almost severed my thumb. I sobbed. Right away, he took me into the beauty salon and the owner of My Day was very comforting and put an excellent tight bandage on my poor thumb (right hand – and as I look at it now, there is no scar, but it was quite a trauma at the time). He felt so bad.

****

I had personal things stolen while at Kingsley Place and also here – clothes, silverware, coin purses. I was reimbursed $100. This is not nearly enough for what I had lost but I was glad to get it.



At the Botanical Gardens (2003)

Chapter 14: Alan's Surprise 60th Birthday Party By Janice

First by phone and then by a very colorful invitation – as a reminder not to give away the surprise to Alan – no one did and boy it was a surprise and a shock. We, the family and friends, were at the Spiaggia Restaurant on North Michigan, waiting behind the door for him. When he opened the door and we all yelled "Surprise," he took a stop backwards, and I thought he was going to keel over.

I'm looking at Janice's invitation listing all the guest's names. It's a beautiful and different kind of invitation. Time – not formal dress – ask that we roast Alan and tell a favorite story – preceding page. When we walked in there was a beautiful baby grand piano – a very nice looking gentleman was playing old and new melodies. Janice sent a cab for Ilene and me. Big cake on a cart at 9 p.m.

Wine and Champagne. I think, not sure, Janice took Alan to Mexico on a cruise as a gift to him. I think Mexico – seems I remember asking Alan if they went to a bull fight (Ugh – guess how bad Miranda would feel/so cruel). Should have been very exciting though – those colorful matadors. I believe Alan took Janice to a foreign country for one of her birthdays.

The roasts were flattering and also funny. I really was so happy to hear the wonderful tributes some of his friends gave him. I was really qvelling.

Chapter 15: The Oak Park Arms

I moved to the Oak Park Arms on April 2nd, 2003. Kingsley Place had been open for only two years when were advised by the Manager that it was closing and residents had to find other places to live in a short span of time. We were all in a state of shock. We thought we were settled for our duration.

When Kingsley closed, I had the opportunity of going to the handsome, luxury, new establishment in Golf Mill, where the majority of residents moved. Golf Mill had a lot to offer – but it also had some drawbacks, mainly the location.

Golf Mill has assisted living quarters like the Arms. When the managers there were notified that Kingsley Place was closing and the residents were looking for new quarters, they couldn't get to Kingsley Place fast enough, because Golf Mill was brand new and needed residents. We were picked up via a big car and the driver kept telling us what a wonderful surprise we were in for. I just went along for the ride. I had already made other plans. They really romanced our group – lunch, entertainment – gifts – and told me Mitzi was welcome and included toys for her in the big white basket with a handle – loaded with fruit, candy bars, a big green pen with their logo on it, but the bottom line is I would have chosen elsewhere to go if I wasn't coming to the Arms. The Location was very very bad – way way far out on Gulf Road – not convenient for Ilene.

Ilene and Alan took a lot of time off to find another assisted living establishment. They checked out certain places people told them about or found in the phone book directory. Even the internet was used. They ran into a roadblock when certain places wouldn't take animals, but Mitzi and I were a package deal.



Thanksgiving at Alan and Janice's apartment (2005)

When Ilene checked the Arms, it was all filled up, but we were put on the waiting list. Then they had an opening the third floor and here I am. It's wonderful to because of the close proximity to Ilene's apartment and work. It was the best move I ever made.

Alan had a driver pick me up and bring me to the Oak Park Arms where Ilene was waiting for me in the lobby, so I could see the building and my future apartment on the third floor (Room 352). The management decided that all the residents who used wheelchairs, walkers or canes should be on the second floor –less of a job to get us "out" should there be a fire or whatever emergency. I then moved down to Room 248.

****

What would my life be if Ilene hadn't suggested I move here? There is no problem answering that. I just wouldn't be having any kind of a nice life—I would be existing that's all.

****

At first I was allowed to walk with Mitzi in the halls. BUT then those of us on the 3rd floor who had to use walkers, canes, or wheel chairs had to be on the 2nd floro (in case of fire – closer to get out). Okay, Fine – Nooooo. Now I can't take her in the hall for several reasons: (1) a resident might trip over her, (2) others may be allergic, and (3) it might be dangerous for Mitzi (now that one is stupid). But I have no alternative, and I found out (via a warning letter from the office) if I tried it, no more Mitzi and they aren't kidding, because I did try it late – after 10 – as there are never any

residents out that late – but it didn't work and I was reported. I got a definite "very sorry," the Manager says –because he knows I love Mitzi, but "rules are rules." I feel so bad as she keeps going to the door and looks back at me – and I have to tell her "No" – and she is gooder about it than I am.

****

I have a Clarity telephone for the hearing impaired, so thanks to Alan again, I have no phone problems. He gave me two. There's one on my living room table and the other in the bedroom. They're very nice looking with big numbers that light up in the dark.

I have total loss in my right ear and not too much better in my left. The hearing aids would have paid for two months rent, but they're super good – if there's not too much noise interference. Mitzi and I don't like loud noises. My aid amplifies noise.

I'm not a pop or soda drinker (I don't even drink enough water), but in my younger days I liked cream soda pop. I don't know if they even make it anymore.

****

Halloween Night 2003. Like Paul Revere, I too made a midnight ride. I didn't have to wake up Ilene. She was already here when I went to the West Suburban Hospital to get help for taking too many Tylenol for severe back pains.

Ilene called 911 for an ambulance. She followed in her car. I got a morphine shot at the emergency room. After the doctor's short visit, I was sent home by ambulance around two in the morning the same night. It took a long time before a doctor came in to see me. Ilene didn't get home until very late. Guess the hospital doctors must have been out for treats or tricks.

Ilene couldn't stay here – no room. She called Alan the next day to tell him about it. It never happened before and not since. I don't know why it happened then.

The ambulance cost me $100.

****

The convenience of having a beauty salon right here in the building is a big plus for me. Connie Valkadar is the owner and operator and we have become quite good friends. She always has a big pot of coffee going plus some goodies to go with it. One day, blueberry and banana muffins that she baked at home.

The salon is tremendous in size (she told me the stats but I forgot). It's not only big, but she has recently decorated. All the walls are orchid. There's a small t.v. in the room – lots of wall space – BIG colorful poster in red, white and blue "We Salute Our Heroes" – variety of magazines – plants (colorful greens and artificial flowers) – daily newspapers – shelves with paper books that you can borrow.

She has a son and daughter with whom she is very close. She showed me several snapshots and a card she received from her daughter and a "Dear Mom" note on the back which was very similar in its message to the kind Ilene gives me.

There's a jar of Crème Savers hard candies by the counter as you pay your bill. Her charges are about the same as Mi Da.

Teresa, the shampoo gal, is from Holland – nice as can be – talks constantly even while she's shampooing me – and I can't understand a word she says – but she gives a very good shampoo. The salon is on the first floor and faces Oak Park Avenue.

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The residents here have never heard of Mah Jongg or Kalukki and I never heard about "Kings in the Corner." I was lucky to be included in a game. We played for pennies – 1 cent a game. If you played with five people and won a game, you'd win 4 cents. If you lost a game, it would only cost you a penny. I look forward to playing every night. Now—I play Bingo a couple of times a week.

****

I remember so many great children's stories – Goldie Locks, Jack and Jill, The Three Bears, Jack in the Bean Stalk, The Little Train that Could, Peter Rabbit, Poems – Miss Muffit, Humpty Dumpty, and a great many more of them. I read them to my kids and Miranda (not sure about this one – she probably wanted more mature material – kidding). I'm sure these are still favorite stories for children.

****

In my day, one famous ball player was Babe Ruth. I also remember Amelia Earhart, who was the first woman to pilot an airplane – I believe she never returned from her last flight.

There were steam boats then and luxury cruisers now.

****

We don't give any particular thought to all the multitude of things we just take for granted (magical). For instance, the remotes – that little black thing you hold in your hand – push a red button – and the t.v. goes on.

I'm getting ahead – first you gotta plug the cord into an "electric outlet." The t.v. itself – looking at mine – it's 10 x 15 –black frame with a glass font – stands on a 2-shelf cart. Alan's is a biggie – all you need is the popcorn and you'd think you were at the movies. My panic if something affects the t.v. – like taking candy away from a kid. I wanna cry desperately if one of my favorite programs is on.

When I watch t.v. I'm looking at places that could very well be in another city, state or country. Now – isn't that magic?

Mercy, helicopters, an amazing thing to see and read about – the lives they save due to the doctors and the expediency of the helicopter itself. I'm not giving enough information, but you get the idea, right?

****

One of my early coats was a very good looking purple cloth coat. Joe called it "my purple mink." I once gave Miranda a rabbit fur coat. Instead of being happy with it, she was extremely unhappy and started to cry. She wanted no part of it—even at that young age, she was against the killing of animals for any purpose at all (I remember eating veggie burgers with her at Ruby Tuesdays, as Miranda is a vegetarian).

Miranda, you will be happy to know that according to the Tribune on August 16, there is now faux suede. Many years ago, I had a fake tiger striped cloth coat. I loved it and later I had it died black. I wore it to Joe's 60th – October was a good month for this lightweight fake fur coat. I did have a real mink coat and another grey fake fur which I remember wearing when I worked at the Farmers Union Central Exhange (1st edition in South St. Paul, I think).

Of course, the money people will still buy the real thing.

****

I remember when I had to go to the Evanston Hospital for physical therapy. I did the exercises in front of a BIG mirror. Another fall – another therapist– who walked the halls with me. Another therapist was Marjorie – she walked the halls with me too. It was she who ordered the walker for me. I can't remember the cost.

I walk here too but lately I've been so busy with the memoirs, I don't have time and it's no longer good without Mitzi, but I'll get at it again.

There were so many kinds of exercises for ankles – arms pulling elastic-type pulls to strengthen the arms – up and down, ankle, etc.

There were stationary bikes too at the gym and with much difficulty and discomfort and with the help of the therapist, I managed to climb up on one and boy was I stiff afterwards – hard to keep it up to get unstiffened.

****

Wednesday, May 18th, 2004, 1:30 p.m.: As I am writing this, I had to get out in the hall as we were having a Tornado drill. We rushed out. I don't remember any tornados though. We've had Fire drills before.

We stood out in the hall until the bell rings all clear. The bell is deafening, lasts so long. Heaven forbid a fire – I don't know how us handicapped would get down. An aide said we'd be carried down and Mitzi too! (Whatta thought!)

****

June 4, 2004: Red letter day – a surprise and happy call from – as he said – "Hello – this is Your long forgotten grandson." It was so good to hear from David. A zillion years ago – he'd come for his favorite lunch – deviled eggs, lox and bagels at Winston.

He is going to call me and set up a date for us to get together.

****

Friday, June 11, 2004: a beautiful BIG time evening. The Senior Prom (it's held every year)– held in the ballroom and it started with a super dinner – from the appetizers to the dessert. Followed by a five-piece orchestra – and everyone was dressed to the 9's. A lot of them were relatives of the residents. Hours – 7 to 11. I didn't have any 9's – so I just went in my slacks and blouse. the entertainment was two professional good looking people – who waltzed – who rumbaed – fox trotted and jitterbugged. They were fun to watch.

I didn't stay to the end. Came back up here about 9 p.m and watched t.v.

****

Monday, June 14th, 2004 at 1:45 p.m. A bonus time – just finished talking to Betsy. It's always a joy when my granddaughters keep in touch – by mail and phone calls. No e-mail – I never learned how when I had the opportunity. Pictures galore. My gallery is something to see.

Yesterday was another nice day. Marcela came for lunch and left around 3 p.m. Like Ilene, she looked like the proverbial "bag lady" when she came in. Lots of goodies – round can of mixed Danish butter cookies, grapes and 3 BIG oranges – all in a beautiful large carrying bag. It took her three different transfers of busses to get here.

****

June 20th 2004: I had a date with the podiatrist on June 19th, 2004. I loved the whirlpool treatment. The new shoes have been hurting my toes. The doctor said to have them stretched giving extra depth to relieve the pressure on the bad toes.

Today, Ilene just blew in and brought two movies, *When a Man Loves a Woman* and *Run Away Bride.* Of course to make our movie time happier, a box of chocolate covered peanuts. She took my shoes to be stretched and returned to watch the movies with me.

****

Tuesday, June 20th: At 2 p.m. I will go down one floor to the beauty salon (and boy, it's a big one). On holidays, 5 operators. You can't beat this convenience.

I have been having all my meals in my apartment, because it is easier than going down – which I do for my evening game of cards. My toes and back are a pain. The back pillow I must have mentioned – from Ilene – gives me a little relief in my wheelchair and bed. These last couple of days have been difficult for Ilene, as she had installed all new windows in her condo. They were in bad condition, since they'd been in since the building was built. Bill gave her good help.

The card games are in the lounge – the card table is across from the grand piano.

****

Sunday, June 21st, 2004: Fathers Day. I remember years ago, walking out of a Jewish tailor shop with Ilene and he saying to me in Yiddish – "A shána madel" – translated a pretty girl. One of Alan's Jewish expressions is "it's *nisht gefarlach*" (means no big deal, not important). He probably has other

Jewish expressions that aren't printable herein. I understand a little Yiddish because my grandparents spoke it. My dad was pretty fluent with it – my mom not at all. So whatever Alan uses, he's picked up on the outside.
****

Thursday, June 22nd, 2004: Lunchtime: I'm thinking of you, Miranda, because one day years ago, you took me out for coffee and donuts at Starbucks at Borders Bookstore. I didn't like the coffee, because it was too strong. I'm sure it must still be there—it was a very popular spot for coffee.

In my lost album, there was a very good snap of my mom and me walking down a St. Paul street, both of us wearing large brimmed good-looking hats. We looked good – if I say so myself. When Miranda and I went someplace, people would ask Miranda where she got her beautiful red hair, and she would say "from my grandmother" and giggle and she'd point to me and say "see!". Both of my granddaughters have beautiful hair.
****

I know I should go back and read the beginning. I don't have the energy to do that – and anyway my toes are still hurting when I walk in these Orthopedic $114 (plus tax) shoes. Walker Shoe Co. (well known company). Ilene has no trouble wearing their shoes, even has her toenails painted red – nice toes.

All my aides are pleasant – a couple of them and I have become friends – Hazel and Joan, in particular. Hazel gave me an antique windmill—very interesting. I gave her a real antique silver napkin holder (the bad thing about silver –needs polishing to be shiny).
****

My Closed Caption T.V. Can you possibly imagine how many hours of complete enjoyment I would be missing without the closed-captioning, thanks to Alan?
****

In the transitions, several albums were lost. Too bad – because with each picture, I dated and described the occasions if there were some (Estes). It made interesting reading (always bragging!)
****

6:10 p.m. Wed. June 23rd, 2004: My spaghetti dinner is coming up shortly. I'll eat fast if it's late, as I'm due downstairs at 6:40 (lousy spaghetti—not good sauce) for my card game.
****

Tuesday, June 24th, 2004: When I was downstairs in the beauty salon, Ilene came in and handed me a bag of gorgeous strawberries. Bill had shopped for her, but she hadn't ordered the berries. This was his contribution to both of us.
****

June 24th, 2004: **MUGS and WHEELS**

Regarding Ilene's driving days back and forth from Oak Park to Chicago. Sometimes she'd come on a Friday night, stay through Saturday and home on Sunday. Before Marcela, she'd sleep in the den, later with me. Same when Miranda would be with me. On weekends, Marcela had nights off and stayed at her home.

Rent here is $2700 a month, which includes meals and assistance with dressing (shoes and hose mainly). Alan helps.

I'm pretty self-sufficient. Sometimes it takes an aide too long to get here—and I get antsy—so I do what I can. The big ouie is bending—I still need help for shoes and hose.

On my table there is an interesting looking pen and pencil holder. Moses, the man who manages the Oak Park Arms, gave it to me when I admired it on his desk.

Mugs: Two white LAKE SHORE, LTD. Alan gave me years ago.

1 green, N.Y.U. School of Law (Miranda sent this to me).

Hope I'm still around when I can introduce Miranda as my granddaughter, the lawyer (there's no charge for hoping)

A beautiful bone china cup from Cecilia when she brought it on one of her visits to me.

Oh- my super-handy jean material carrier bag from Marcela. It hangs perfectly on my walker. Has a cute figure of a kitten on the front. It's large enough so that I can carry many different objects in it – mail, quarts of milk, pens – magazines – money.

This is Thursday, June 24. Ilene and Bill will be stopping tonight to drop off the items I asked her to buy at the grocery store.

Last night was our party of the month for those born in June. Their names were called and each was given a long-stemmed orange iris. The pianist played Mozart and other classical pieces. Nice—if you enjoy this type of music. We had another master of ceremonies –funny jokes and a good singer and guitarist.

****

Tomorrow is June 30th 2004, and we are going to have a little family reunion here.

****

Friday, July 2nd 2004: Sunday's visit came about – when David called and said "This is your long lost forgotten grandson," I was, of course, pleased to hear from him and invited him for lunch. He said "fine, and I'll see if my dad can come too." David, Alan and Ilene came for lunch. It was so nice seeing them. If I had known grandchildren were so much fun—I would have had them first.

Dave looked great – no beard – he says his girlfriend doesn't approve. Her name is Becky – very orthodox family. He was very warm and fun and helpful. He and Becky are an "item" – no ring yet.

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July 3rd, 2004: Arms had its own parade. The waitresses and many residents walked down Oak Park Avenue. The help were in colorful red, white and blue tops. I was asked if I would join too. I declined, but some of the residents participated – walkers, wheelchairs, canes, I watched from my window. I had "like" box seats.

"Please Don't Rain On My Parade" – I dunno where this came from. Guess the line came to me when I was watching the Arms parade. It didn't rain then or latter."

"When I Am Old, I Shall Wear Purple" – Now – at this particular moment why? would I think of this book Miranda gave me so many many years ago (at Winston).

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Sunday, July 2004: Very nice Bill T. Not only purchased my groceries per Ilene's list but put them all away. Ilene wasn't even here.

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Monday, July 19th, 2004: I am definitely getting (or already have arrived—at a paranoia stage. I reported two pair of expensive tweezers missing—BAD CALL—one of the aides found them almost immediately. I excuse myself—So Much has been stolen—it's the first thing that comes to mind.

3:46: My dinner just came up. Macaroni with diced cheese and honey glazed carrots—angel food cake—all deliciously good and fattening.

Well, Ilene isn't going to be here until Thursday.

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July 20th, 2004: I haven't seen or heard from Alan or David since the day they were here for dinner, 6/30. I wonder why we have this long estrangement. I'm going to call him.

Late July 2004—Ilene was here with a movie—not good. I can't even remember what it was.

The next night, she brought a movie, the title was "Horses." I didn't expect her—I was at the table writing and she just popped in. When the movie was over, she left—didn't want to stay, she had things she wanted to do at home.

GREAT- Yep.

Ilene brought back the shoes that she had taken to the shoemaker that she had taken to be stretched again (twice or three times). They are now okay.

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July 16, 2004: I don't know if these pages represent a diary, memoirs or a journal. Possibly all three.

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Sunday: the latest gift from Ilene is an adorable little figurine called "Angel Cheeks." I really can't do justice to describe it, so you'll have to come and see it.

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Sunday, August 1st, 2004, 5 p.m.: Miranda had called Ilene from home to tell her that her arrival time would be two hours late. I can't wait to see her. It just seems such a long time since her last visit.

Mitzi and I went for a walk this afternoon and I was stiff because I haven't done any walking for a couple of weeks. I had shoe problems.

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August 1st: The 4th of July decorations are still up (in honor of Miranda's visit).

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Monday, August 2nd, 2004: Miranda came with Nathan, who is her little brother, for lunch. When he came in, looking absolutely adorable, he complained of stomach pains and didn't want to eat until the waitress brought in two BIG scoops of ice cream. There was no problem with his stomach—the ice cream went down in a short period of time. He's not only adorable, he's polite and smart. He and I played checkers while Miranda read and he won two games honestly. Believe it or not I lost because he was the better player. We also played gin rummy—he had never played it before but caught on quickly.

Nathan is also a child of divorce but there again no living problems. He stays with both his mother and dad.

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August 3rd, 2004: Miranda is spending part of the day today with her friend Alfonso, whom she met at Dartmouth. I am glad that there is still somebody in the area for her to be with, as she's giving me most of her time.

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August 4th, 2004: Miranda came to Oak Park on Sunday, August 1st and from Monday on has been with me putting hours of computer work into the production of "My Life." Just imagine what I would have had to pay had I hired a professional person to do my life.

Miranda and Dola showed Ilene a beautiful time when she came to visit them in New York. She's 28 and looks 20. She has a real good figure, about a size 8, beautiful skin, and great big gorgeous blue eyes.

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August 4th, 2004: I have a new friend here in the building, Joan. She knocked at my door one day and asked if I was the lady with the cat. Now she lives on 4, but look how popular Mitzi is to have someone notice her and tell Joan about her, knowing that Joan loves cats. About 7:30 p.m. tonight, she came down and brought me a box of tea, which is what Miranda drinks, a Reader's Digest and a large container of a beef flavored noodle soup and a couple of jokes and cartoons. She is a very nice person and has her own kind of troubles.

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August 11th, 2004, St. Patrick's Day, 6:30 p.m.: The Ossers were in Michigan on Sunday and they all went fishing and Evan caught a fish – that must have been exciting.
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August 14th: Joe would wear a bright green tie and matching handkerchief on St. Patrick's Day. He was such a good Irishman. On St. Patrick's Day, certain areas around the Chicago River were colored green. I believe the color was sprayed by air planes.

I watched a group of Greek dancers and their native dance is very much like our Jewish native dance, the hora.
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August 29th, 2004: There is a big indoor picnic going on now in the dining room – balloons, streamers, and entertainment. I'm not going down as I'd like to finish this memoir as soon as possible. There is no special reason for the unexpected entertainment.

The other day I made some comment to Ilene about my back and sitting problems. She told me Ernest Hemmingway did some of his best work standing up and worked into the very early morning hours. Maybe he had a sitting problem.

I remember the years that postage was 3 cents. It is now 37 cents. It kept going up gradually.
****
August 29th, 2004: I believe it must be blueberry time because –as noted herein-- Connie gave me a blueberry and banana muffin on Saturday, I read a card from Betsy and it depicted the Ossers picking blueberries, and tonight a delicious slice of blueberry cake was the desert tonight. It's a beautiful fall day.
August 2004: When Ilene checked in this morning, she told me she also had heard the big news – Erin had taken her first step, but Betsy was wondering if Erin would remember to keep stepping.

Chapter 16: Some more about me
Paranoia – I have a bad case of it, because I have had so many things stolen that when I can't find something right away, I think somebody took it.
Stuttering – I had a pretty bad case of it when I was in grammar school. I had particular trouble with any word beginning with "e"—Europe, empty, enough, etc. I think I overcame it by the time that I entered high school but it was so embarrassing that I never wanted to speak out in class, and that's peculiar because I was punished for talking too much.
Allergies – I have only one, thank goodness, but like any allergy, it is a miserable one, and that's elastic, especially where my bras hook in the back, on panty hose, on knee highs. I use pieces of material between my back and my bra where the elastic is.
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I won't list them all, but here's some events in my medical history:

- 1941: Hemorrhoid surgery
- 1963: Hysterectomy
- 1985: Hammertoe surgery. I need it again but the doctor said that I'm too old for it
- 1987: Fell in Carson's, fractured my wrist and Carson's called an ambulance for me.
- 1988: Fell in the foyer of Winston. Broken shoulder bone.
- 1990: Had rapid heart beats and had to wear a monitor for ten days.
- 1991: High blood pressure, and I still have it.
- 1991: Fell in the kitchen, sprained my left ankle.
- 1992: Fractured middle toe on the right foot

- 1993: Hip replacement.
- 1995: Fractured several bones on the left side of foot.
- 2003: Hernia surgery.
- 2004: Severe back pains.

My many falls resulted in bad injuries. I am now using a walker and wheelchair ($1000). Alan bought it for me.

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Dena Bierman is one of my two friends that are still living. She lives in a suburb near St. Louis. She's very wealthy and was a beautiful blonde gal and in her youth from her snapshots is very attractive, but she lost part of her sight from a detached retina after she was married but that did not prevent her from doing her husband's office works, running a beautiful home. We visited her when she lived in California.

Dena was married twice. Her first husband died very young. I stood up at their wedding in St. Paul. Although she's Jewish, she doesn't follow the Jewish tradition. Her little granddaughter is named after her, with her name spelled like mine.

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My Jewish name is Dinky (I think), but I was never called that.

Closure Time

I'm sure I've missed some points of interest in this journal, but it's time I quit pushing my memory buttons. I truly apologize to my family members if I have forgotten something of importance. I'm sure I have.

I love you all so very very much and hope you reach this 90 year status and more – without the many rough bumps I had along the way.

This is a wrap.

DJ:mj



My family celebrating my 95th birthday with me: David, Janice, Alan, Miranda, Dola, Lauren, Betsy, Erin, and Ilene